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VOLUME 2
ISSUE 7

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 19 (April 1999)

THE YEAR OF THE ROLE

GAME

13 NEW RPGS

IN-DEPTH PREVIEW FINAL FANTASY VIII

April 1999
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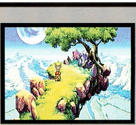
Final Fantasy VIII

Legend of Legaia



Lunar:
Silver Star Story

Star Ocean

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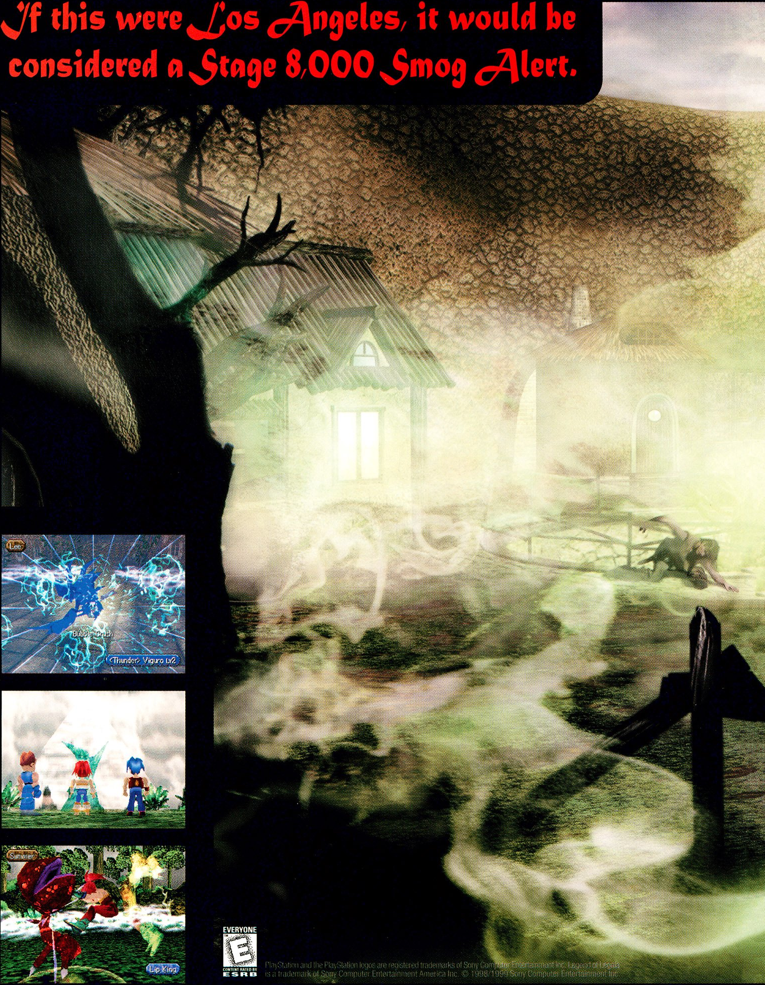
If this were Los Angeles, it would be considered a Stage 8,000 Smog Alert.


Lee
Bubble Crush
<Thunder> Viguro Lv2
Summer
Lip King

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A deadly mist grips the land. In its wake lies a decomposing herd of corpses. In its path are the last remaining outposts of civilization. To save them, you must fend off an army of mad beasts, a giant monster and a mysterious wizard who will stop at nothing short of total annihilation. The secret that you will discover lies in the Genesis trees. Can you find and save all the trees? Or will you be taking one last breath before the long dirt nap?

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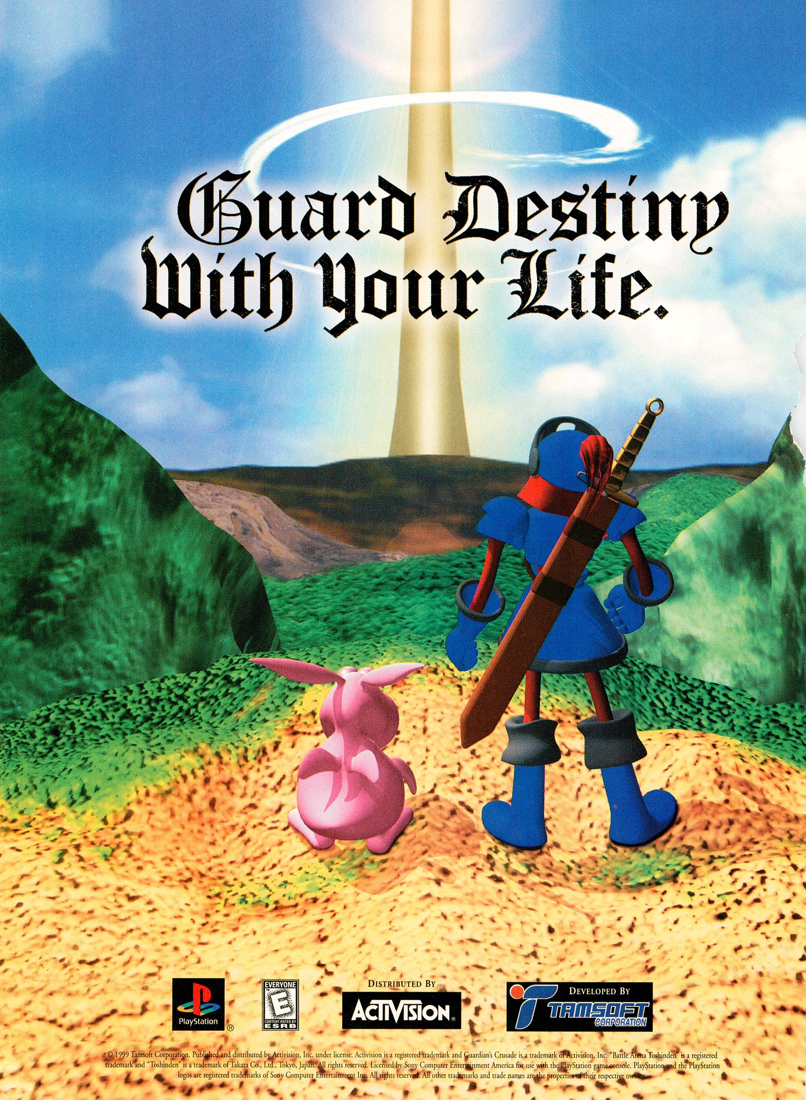
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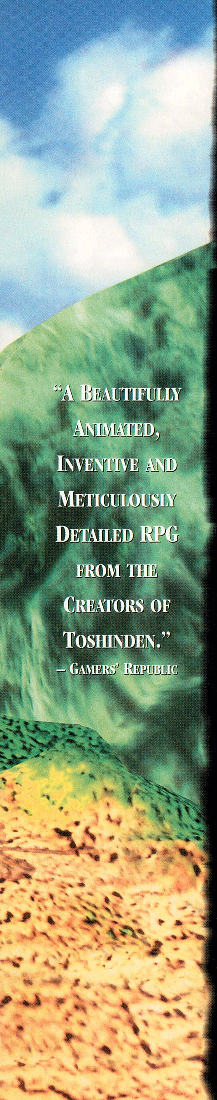

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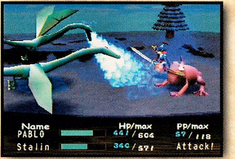
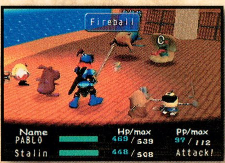

Name
PABLO
Stalin
Hp/max
441 / 604
340 / 571
PP/max
57 / 118
Attack!

Determine the fate of an evolving baby creature as you develop its personality and skill along your quest.


Fireball
Name
PABLO
Stalin
Hp/max
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448 / 508
PP/max
97 / 112
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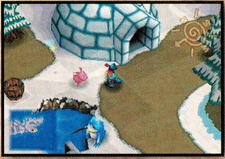
Battle alongside a unique back-up squad of allies with special abilities like hypnosis, blood-sucking – and more.



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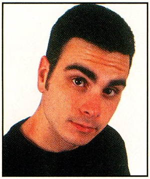
Editorial

A few unofficial words from the official editor-in-chief



The flash from the camera that took this photo hurt Kraig's eyes to the tune of 100 hit points. Don't worry, he drank two potions to replenish his energy.

Can Life Be Measured In Hit Points?

You know, ever since Final Fantasy VII arrived and put role-playing games on the map, it seems PlayStation gamers just can't get enough of the darned things. There has to be some deep-seated psychological reason behind this, something we all relate to in RPGs. Sure, RPGs have great stories about love, friendship and heroics, but we can find those in movies, TV and books. There *must* something we get in RPGs that we can't get in anything else.

The obvious answer is that we get to interact in worlds that only exist in dreams. But you can do that in other games. The things that most symbolize RPGs, then, are turn-based combat and hit points. But do we really desire this form of interactivity so much that we must buy PlayStation RPGs by the millions to quench our thirst? Why do we desire something so impractical? Impractical? Sure. Can you think of anything painful in life that's reflected by a number? Or when you're in a fight do you always wait for someone to hit you before you hit back?

I'm a rational guy, however, and I figure that we should attempt to apply these symbolic elements of RPGs—turn-based combat and hit points—to real life. So let's see how that would work out.

Mission Statement

The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine is the only Sony Computer Entertainment America-licensed magazine and is published by ZD Inc. through an exclusive arrangement. As such, *OPM* remains independent from SCEA, and is a critical, autonomous voice that helps readers get more out of their PlayStation system by delivering the most current, comprehensive and candid coverage of PlayStation software and hardware.

Your girlfriend dumps you -50

Her best friend asks you out +100

The date goes well +50

Your ex-girlfriend asks out the captain of the football team -100

Who gives you a personal demonstration of his exceptional judo skills -200

While recovering in the hospital, you hear your ex-girlfriend has contracted mono +106

Afterwards, she comes crying back to you +50

...because she's pregnant -1231

Your newborn son has quite a throwing arm +1500

And come to think of it, so did that captain of the football team -20,000

All right, so maybe RPGs are a little practical, after all. And due to this startling revelation, we've decided to delve into the deluge of future PlayStation RPGs. There's an abundance of them coming out this year, but we're guessing your wallet only possesses enough hit points to buy some of them. So take a gander at *OPM*'s 1999 RPG roundup, and see if there's something that strikes your fancy.

Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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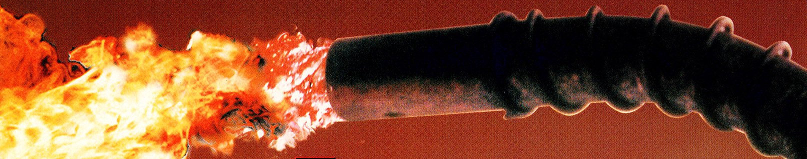

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"Rogue Trip delivers all the car-blasting action I'd want..."
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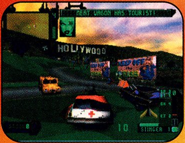

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- PS EXTREME

"The lush graphics, incredible sound track, intuitive level design and overall fun factor are unparalleled in this category..."
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6 AUTO MERCS LEFT
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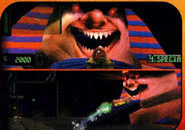
- USA TODAY

"...we have a new king in the world of vehicular combat...95%..."
- PLAYSTATION NATION



"Rogue Trip is the best car combat game of the year..."
- GAMEFAN

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jdsuter@bellsouth.net

"I have read lots of different game magazines, but I don't think they are half as good as EGM."

Isaac Yim
Irvine, CA

"I want to commend you for putting out **Great Issues After Great Issues.**"

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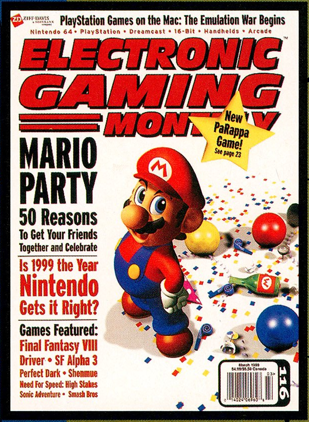
Ostertag1@juno.com

"You guys are **Funny.**"

Ed Zombie
Hackensack, NJ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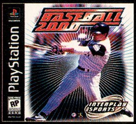

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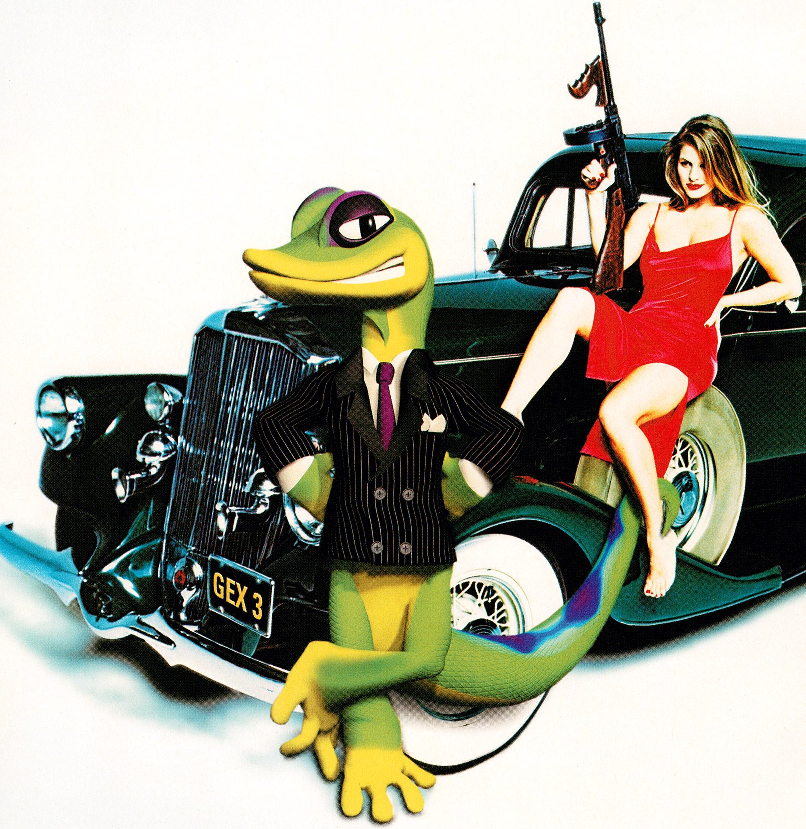

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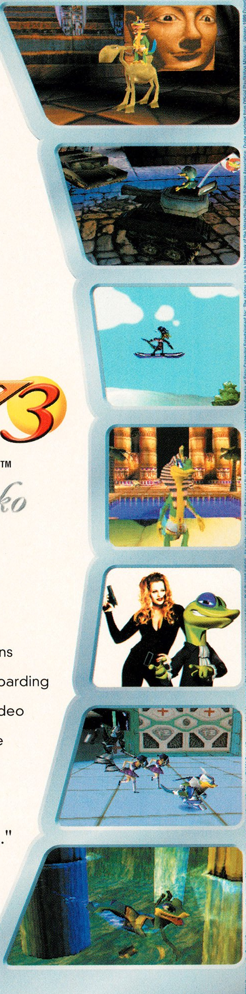

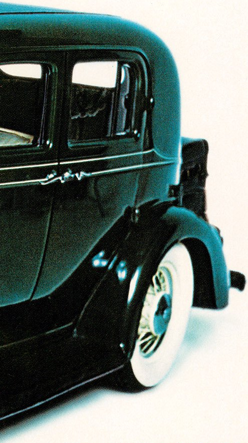

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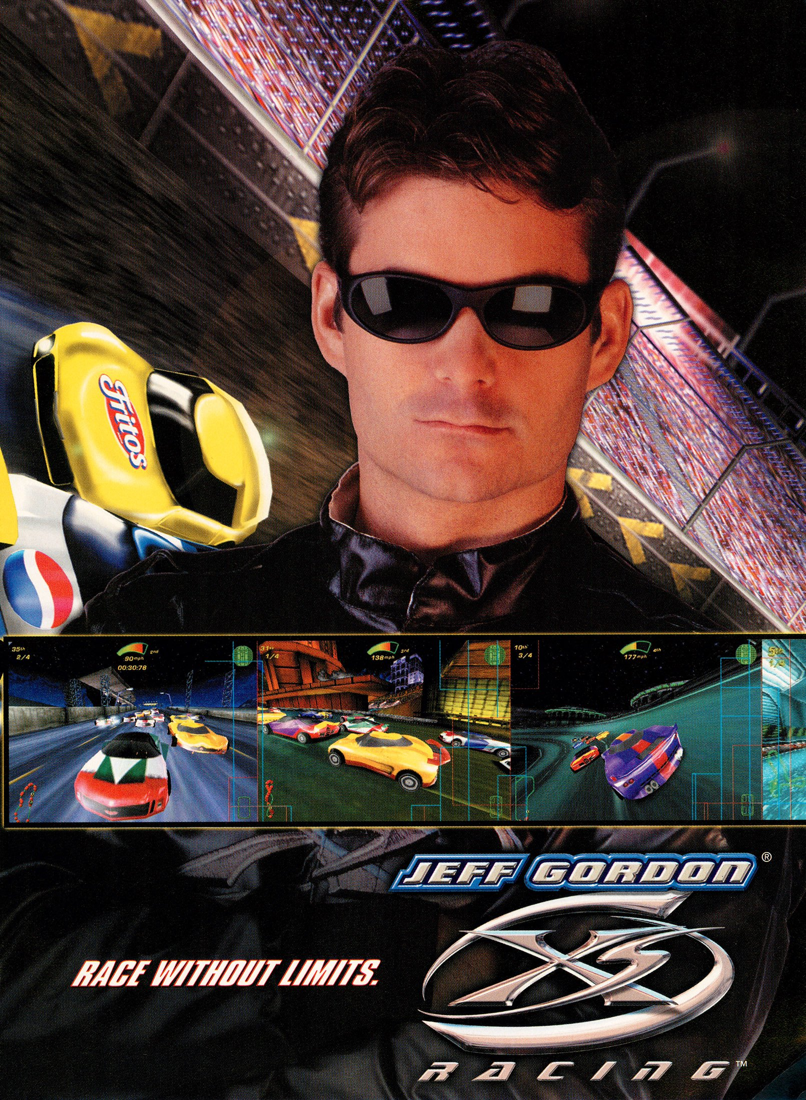
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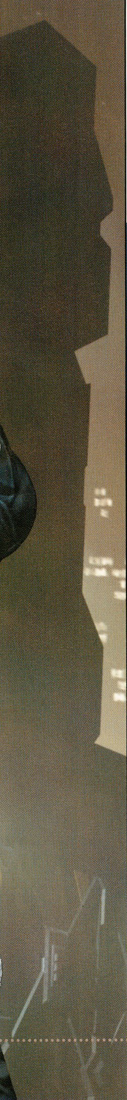

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Year of the RPG

Final Fantasy VIII leads the next wave of RPGs onto your PlayStation this year—take a look at this month's cover story to decide which ones are for you.

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Gran Turismo 2!

It sounds impossible, but the PlayStation's most brilliant racing game is about to get better. We have early info on this summer's racing game to beat.

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Silent Hill Strategy

After you find out that the town of Silent Hill is not the ideal vacation spot, you'll want to use our strategy guide to get you and your daughter the *hell out.*

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G Police 2

A new chapter unfolds in the G-Police series, which includes many new vehicles and a two-legged attack mech. Take a look at this early preview.

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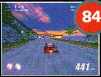
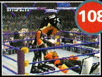
Reviews



Rollcage, Blast Radius, NBA In The Zone '99, BAM '99, Pro 18 World Tour Golf, Bomberman Fantasy Race, Rushdown, T'ai Fu and Invasion from Beyond get assigned disc ratings.

84

Tricks



Get free apples in Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, do a secret move in Bust A Groove, get cool cycle codes for Moto Racer 2 and get big heads in WCW/nWo Thunder, plus more.

108

g.e.a.r.

Check out the new Crash Bandicoot plush dolls (they're actually keychains—for really big pockets) as well as Gex: Deep Cover Gecko figures and early info on the upcoming Star Wars toys.

114

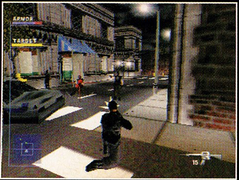
Demo Disc

Test drive two great racing games this month (R4 and Rollcage). Then check out playables of Ehrgeiz, Rugrats, WCW/nWo Thunder, Warzone 2100 and a video of Legend of Legaia.

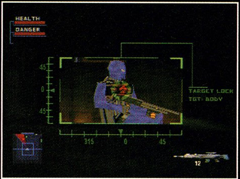
116

SILENCE

CAN BE DEADLY


ARMOR
TARGET
15

Run, strafe, crouch, roll and climb through 13 highly detailed, real-world environments filled with lethal terrorists.


HEALTH
DANGER
45
0
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TARGET LOCK
TGT: BODY
315
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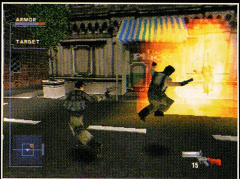
45
12

Take your best shot with 4 targeting modes, including nightvision sniper mode.


ARMOR
TARGET
15

Wreak fiery havoc with 17 deadly weapons including the G-18 Pistol Machine Gun and M-79 Grenade Launcher.

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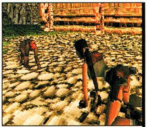
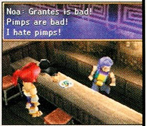
Caption Contest Winner



"Bobo would go on to enjoy many more mating seasons, but none would compare to the balmy summer of '98." Congrats to Ryan Zillmer of Beaver Dam, WI!

Now you too can have your shot at history with the OPM Caption Contest! Every month, we run a game-related picture or screenshot. Your job is to write a humorous caption for it and submit it to us at any of the addresses on the following Letters page. The winner will be chosen by the following scientific method: We'll read them all, and the one that makes us laugh our asses off will get a sparkling new game. Now, see what you can do with this pic:



Noa: Grantes is bad!
Pimps are bad!
I hate pimps!

[You didn't really think those were the official rules, did you? For all the legal stuff on this and our other contests, please refer to page 97.]

The Emulator Issue

Dear *OPM*,

Although it's not completely surprising that *Official U.S. Playstation Magazine* has published an adolescent temper tantrum about the Connectix Virtual Game Station (VGS), it's a bit sad that the name-calling had to take place in the Editorial section of your March 1999 issue. The most upsetting aspect of the editorial was how it focused on bashing the Macintosh and totally missed the point of this new piece of software. There are many computer users who will never buy a PlayStation, but welcome the introduction of new games to their computer of choice. This opens the PlayStation game market to another group of gamers who end up adding to Sony's (and *OPM*'s) bottom line.

I don't see any purpose for this editorial except to allow one PlayStation enthusiast to vent his spleen. And maybe that's enough for *OPM*, but it also runs the risk of alienating many new PlayStation game players. It certainly will make me hesitate before purchasing any future copies of *OPM*. I just hope it's not an indication of a larger problem: When you realize that Sony (the company that would have liked to keep this emulator from ever seeing the light of day) officially sanctions your magazine, you have to admit the motivation for this editorial seems suspicious.

Steven M. Fish
via the Internet

Letter of the Month

Dear OPM,

Being one of those people who gets bugged continually about computers, I have to both disagree and grudgingly agree with your emulator stand [Editorial, Vol. 2, Issue #6, p. 6]. When asked "Gee, what kind of computer should I buy?" I try to get the individual to describe the real reason for the purchase. Eventually about a quarter admit to wanting to play games. Those folks I point to PlayStation.

As for the rest, I suggest they pick an amount they're willing to spend and get the best machine for that price. They'll be upgrading in two years—sooner if they plan on serious gaming. Better to buy both a PC and a PlayStation. So why would anyone want to have an emulator?

Think about it. You're on a plane/train/wagon for God knows how long and want some relief. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to slip in the game you've invested 40 hours of time in and kill some downtime on a favorite pastime?

OK, so unofficial emulators will probably always suck. Why can't Sony create an emulator to cash in on a serious market and provide some real stability? This would allow new sales of games to people who feel awkward buying a console. (Trust me, enough of my "professional friends" kill quite a lot of time on my PS, yet wouldn't dream of buying a "kid's game" for themselves. Call it Peter Pan envy.) It would also allow those of us who buy the games more opportunities to play.

Now that the price of a PlayStation is dwarfed by any decent video card, no one is going to buy a PC just to play PlayStation games. I bet they would, however, pay 50 bucks for an emulator that would allow them to enjoy the PlayStation experience on the machines they already own, in those locations where a PlayStation might be awkward to lug around.

As Bill Gates discovered, there's more money in software.

My $0.02.

Stephen Moore
via the Internet

Do you think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your timely, original, well-written video game expositions (you don't even have to agree with us!) and you too could win an official OPM Box of Joy. New surprise goodies every month!

When Kraig wrote the editorial, he knew full well that some people would take it as toeing Sony's company line. But this is one of those circumstances where what he believed put him in that position, and he's not going to change his opinion to avoid that. (We don't modify our beliefs for *any* reason—not to align them with SCEA, and not to avoid accusations of bias when our opinions coincide with theirs in the first place.) It probably won't be the last time this happens. *OPM* enjoys editorial independence from Sony, and if you've read any of Kraig's previous rants, we're certain you would agree. After all, who would actually sanction those rants, for heaven's sake?

As for bashing Macs, we think you would be hard-pressed after further critical review to find any serious bashing of the machine, aside from Kraig's snide remark about tangerine-colored iMacs (which obviously isn't that serious in the first place). But really, we think that's pretty justified. The mere thought of orange computers is just too much to fathom.

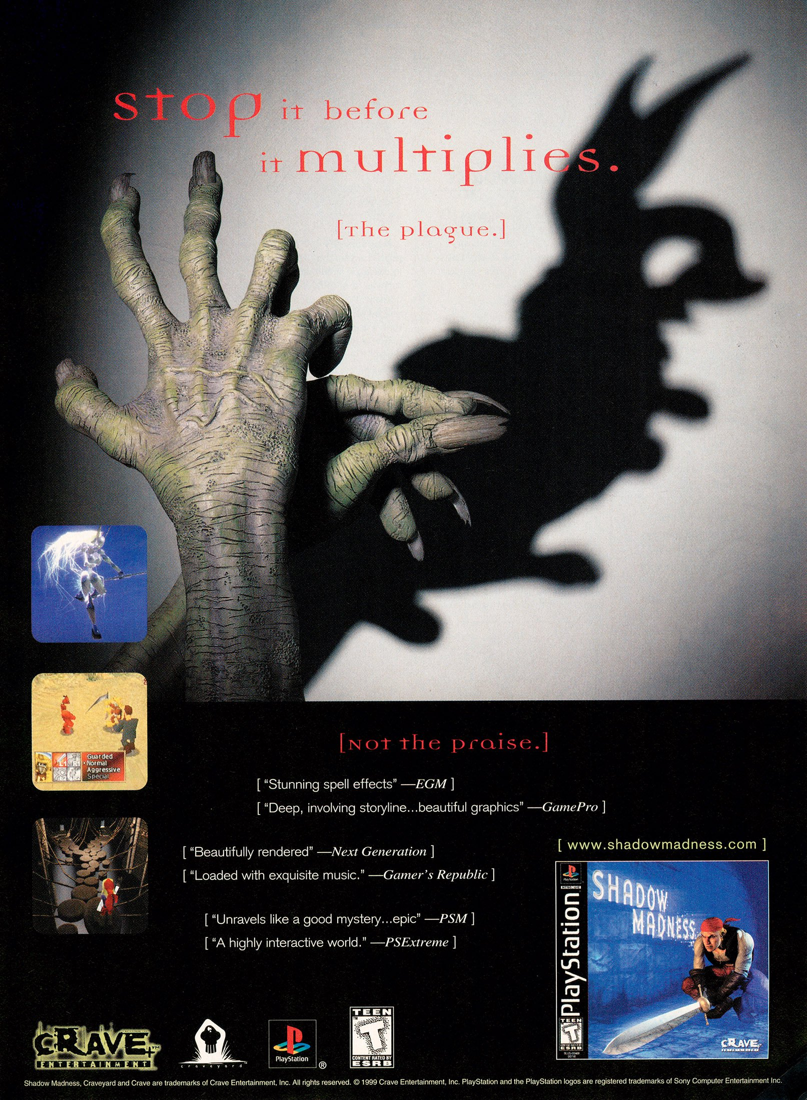
But seriously, we use Macs to produce *OPM*, and that's probably the highest compliment we can give the machines.

we want your input!

How do you like the mag? What about the design? Are we leaving anything out?

Let us know!

To get special attention as far as design and content issues go, label your letters or e-mails with the heading: PlayStation Magazine suggestions c/o the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine at the addresses on the final Letters page.
We can't wait to hear from you.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Normal
Aggressive
Special
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stop it before
it multiplies.

[the plague.]

[not the praise.]

["Stunning spell effects" —*EGM*]
["Deep, involving storyline...beautiful graphics" —*GamePro*]

["Beautifully rendered" —*Next Generation*]
["Loaded with exquisite music." —*Gamer's Republic*]

["Unravels like a good mystery...epic" —*PSM*]
["A highly interactive world." —*PSExtreme*]

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Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services. For more information see this month's Demo Disc section.

Solid Soundtrack

Dear *OPM,*

One of my favorite games is Metal Gear Solid, and I consistently play the game over and over, if only for one reason: the music!! Please let me know, is there a soundtrack out there?

Travis Buonocore
Enquidu@aol.com

There is indeed a soundtrack, but at this point it's available only in Japan (as many game soundtracks are). Just about any reputable game importer should be able to locate a copy for you.

Final Fantasies

Dear *OPM,*

I've been hearing that Final Fantasy IX is already under development! I've also heard that the game could be released as soon as Sept. 9, 1999 (in Japan, at least). Is any of this true?

Michael Cosand
via the Internet

Now that FFVIII has already posted astounding sales figures in Japan, it should come as no surprise that FFIX is under development. But the rumor that it will be released on 9/9/99 is just that, a rumor. Sources say there was talk about such a release during the early planning stages of the game, but the idea was scrapped when it became clear the date was unrealistic.

A Cruel Joke

Dear *OPM,*

I HAVE STOPPED MR. DOMINO!!

the_mechanic99@yahoo.com

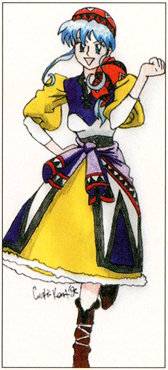
Friends, before you become alarmed, know that we checked into the situation and learned Mr. Domino is in fact alive and well, although he has been in retreat at his secluded Domino Lair off the coast of Kuala Lumpur, avoiding most contact with the press and paparazzi. The claims of domino stoppage are, in the words of Mr. Domino himself, "preposterous."

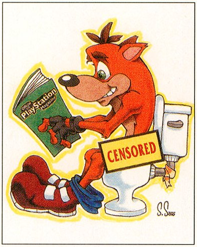
Unfortunately, Mr. Domino's close friend Professor Pickles (an enigmatic inflatable vegetable sent to us courtesy of Ascii, and a fine, upstanding fellow) fell victim this month to a forcible deflation. Pickles is survived by a jar of green liquid no one will touch, and will be sorely missed.

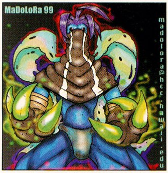
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO *OPM*? POINT YOUR BROWSER TO http://subscribe.playstationmagazine.com/service AND FILL OUT THE APPROPRIATE FORM. WITH A CREDIT CARD, YOU CAN EVEN START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION!

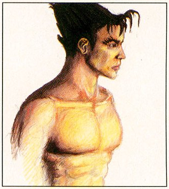
More Reader Art Than You Can Shake a Stick At

Every month we'll be picking one exceptional piece as our Reader Art of the Month. The creator of the winning work will have his/her piece published and will receive a new game (a *good* new game) in the mail—so include your mailing address with all submissions. Runners-up (as many as we want, 'cause it's our magazine) are printed as well. Good luck!









Check out this month's artists! Left: Curtis Kent, San Leandro, CA; top right: our most frequent entrant, Andy Madolora, madolora@hcc.hawaii.edu; bottom right: Jordan Nieuwland; and above, this month's winner: Sergio Soto, Deer Park, NY. Congratulations, Sergio! Your new game is on its way!

3 ways to reach us

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Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

fax:
If you need to
reach us now
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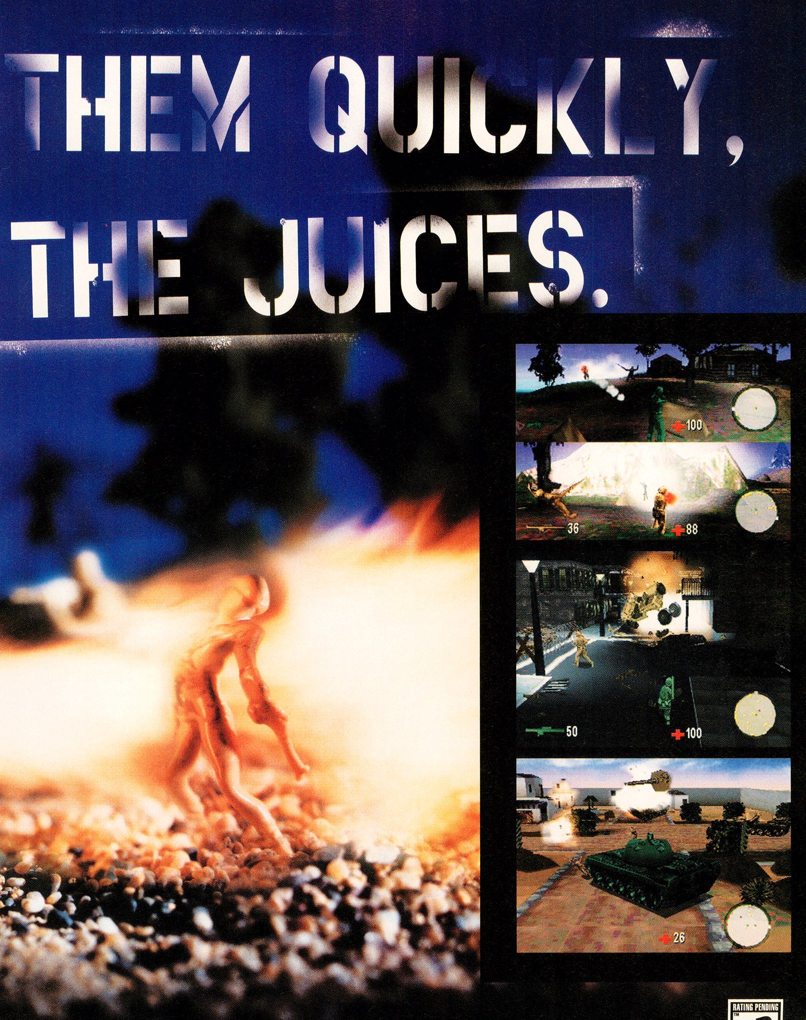

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PlayStation 2 a Reality

Sony Unveils the First Piece of Their Super Console

It could very well have been just another lecture full of nerdy engineers listening to yet another company's dry presentation about their newest chip breakthrough. But something was different.

It was Sony speaking. No, it was Sony Computer Entertainment. And the lecturer suggested the chip may work well with a consumer electronics machine—maybe one that focuses on games, for example.

Could it be...PlayStation 2?

Embracing Parallelism

On February 16, at the International Solid-State Circuits Conference in San Francisco, Toshiba and Sony Computer Entertainment announced the specifications of what presumably will be the CPU of the PlayStation 2.

Attending the conference was Ken Kutaragi, the father of the PlayStation; Phil Harrison, vice president of third party and R&D for SCEA; and Andrew House, vice president of marketing for SCEA. Sony representatives would not confirm or deny that this new chip was for their new console, but the ISSCC conference issued a press release stating quite clearly that the chip would "establish the performance of the newest Sony PlayStation."

So let's get into the performance of this new chip. It's important to note that these specifications are for the CPU and associated components only, *not* the graphics engine. Anyone who owns a PC and has compared the performance of both a low-end and a high-end 3D card on the exact same processor knows that the resulting performance is greatly influenced by how good the rendering engine is.

Sony claims that the processor can transform 55 million polygons per second with no effects, 32 million polygons per second with parallel lighting, 30 million polygons per second with lighting and fog, and 13 million Bezier surface patches per second.

The Sony CPU embraces parallelism in a big way. While the current PlayStation CPU/GTE (central processing unit/geometry transform engine) combination allows some geometry and main CPU operations to run at the same time, the new PlayStation 2 CPU has two integer pipelines, as well as a floating-point math processor, two vector math units (VPU0 and VPU1), and a dedicated MPEG-2 decoding subsystem.

Not sure what we're talking about? Don't worry, we'll explain it all in a just a second.

Division of Labor

The core of the chip is the CPU, which is based on the MIPS RISC architecture, just like the CPU in the PlayStation and the Nintendo 64. This opens up the possibility of backward compatibility, as the instruction set is very likely similar or compatible to the custom R3000 in the current PlayStation. The two integer pipelines run concurrently, allowing two instructions to be processed at a time. (In processor lingo, this feature makes the processor core "superscalar.") In addition, while integer instructions are being executed, additional floating point calculations can be performed by the floating-point processor.

What's most exciting about the new chip, however, are the dual vector processing units (VPUs) that run at the same time as the CPU core. These units are similar in function to the current PlayStation's GTE, which accelerates the calculation of polygon coordinates.

According to Sony, however, the principle behind the design was not just to use the VPUs for geometry transformation; the dual units are also set up for developers to use one of them exclusively for calculating in-game physics and other number-crunching tasks, like artificial intelligence. Presumably, developers will have free reign to use the two VPUs as they please, but this was the intent of the design, as the second VPU, which is intended for polygon processing, is somewhat more powerful than the first.

The PlayStation 2, much like its predecessor, will also perform hardware accelerated video decoding. The IPU, which handles decompression of MPEG-2 video, corresponds to the MDEC on the original PlayStation, which accelerates decompression of JPEG images. Just like the other components on the chip, the IPU can run independently, which means that it should be possible to overlay high-polygon-count characters over MPEG-2 video, or use video to texture elements in a game's world.

PS2
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START
ANALOG

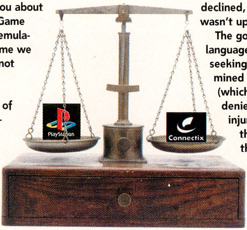
Big Numbers

The 128-bit chip will run at 250MHz, and it will talk to the memory in the system at 125MHz. Sony claims that the processor can transform 55 million polygons per second with no effects, 32 million polygons per second with parallel lighting, 30 million polygons per second with lighting and fog, and 13 million Bezier surface patches per second. (For those keeping score on the PC side of gaming, Bezier patches are how the forthcoming Quake 3 Arena will render curved surfaces. This technique uses a patch of 16 "control points" and a series of equations to define a curved surface. It is unlikely that the rendering engine will draw these directly, as the patches can be reduced to polygons before being drawn. One advantage is that it should be easy to make curved surfaces use fewer polygons when they are far from the viewer and more polygons when they are very close, allowing objects to have a great deal of detail at close range without greatly affecting overall speed.)

Again, we stress—these specs are for the *main CPU only*; the renderer for the PlayStation 2 probably won't be able to draw all 55 million polygons (although we won't know for sure until those specs are revealed).

Still, these incredibly powerful specifications are very exciting, and more details will surely follow. Sony has already arranged for the gaming press to gather for an event in early March in Japan, and speculation is heavy that this is the when the wraps will be fully taken off the PlayStation 2. The countdown begins.

No More Games...Sony Sues Connectix



Last month we told you about Connectix's Virtual Game Station PlayStation emulator for the Mac. By the time we went to press, Sony had not yet issued an official response—but that has changed now. At the end of January, Sony filed a lawsuit against Connectix in San Francisco Federal District Court alleging, among other things, that Connectix violated Sony's intellectual property rights through the creation of this emulator.

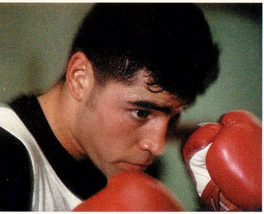
The suit alleges two claims of copyright infringement, circumvention of technical protection measures, contributory copyright infringement, reverse palming off, trademark dilution, and interference with contract. The main complaint is the circumvention of Sony's antipiracy protection, which Sony contends could lead to the illegal sale and distribution of counterfeit PlayStation software. Connectix contends that the VGS has the same kinds of protections that Sony's PlayStation hardware does, though that security was easily bypassed just days after the product was put on sale at January's MacWorld '99.

Revealed in Sony's legal filing is the fact that Connectix originally approached Sony to get technical assistance and support for the Virtual Game Station in September 1998. Sony CEA declined, saying the product wasn't up to their standards.

The goal of the suit? In the language of the law, Sony is seeking damages to be determined at trial; a preliminary (which has already been denied) and permanent injunction against sales of the Virtual Game Station; the recall of all copies of the VGS already sold; attorney's fees; and additional relief as the court may decide.

When asked whether Sony would be open to the idea of licensing Connectix's software if the company were to enable all the anti-counterfeiting techniques used on PlayStation discs, SCEA legal counsel Riley Russell said no, adding: "Our interest is the PlayStation and producing good software for that hardware...and we would take action against anyone who releases an emulator for profit." In Russell's words: "What we want is for PlayStation games to run well and correctly—and they don't on a Mac."

Connectix president and CEO Roy McDonald stands by the product and is confident that the VGS doesn't violate any of Sony's patents and that Connectix will emerge from this action victorious. A PC version of the product is already in development, but is taking longer because of differences in CD-ROM drives and video cards on the PC.

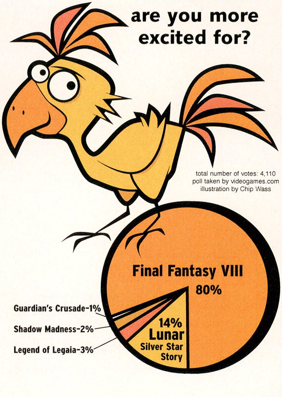


Shadow Boxing

WBC Welterweight Champ Oscar De La Hoya reportedly used Electronic Arts' Knockout Kings to train for his Feb. 13 title fight against Ike Quartey. De La Hoya said that Knockout Kings helped him train on finding the virtual Quartey's weaknesses and learning what he'll do in a given situation.

Apparently it worked. The outcome of the event ended with De La Hoya winning in a split-decision of a fight that was called one of the best Welterweight fights ever.

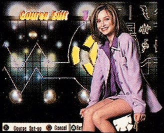
Which RPG are you more excited for?



total number of votes: 4,110
poll taken by videogames.com
illustration by Chip Wass

things we think we think this month

1. If the real world used hit-points, Jerry Springer would come out on top.
2. If it was a publically traded company, LucasArts would be the stock to buy right now.
3. Psygnosis should not be wasting their time with golf games. That would be akin to EA Sports developing an RPG.
4. We're gonna hear a lot about PlayStation 2 in the next couple of months. Facts, not fiction.
5. The sequel to Irritating Stick has been announced. It's called Ally McBeal.



6. London smells funny.
7. Square has said they want to push the Chocobo as their mascot. Expect KFC to lead with the first promotional tie-in.
8. Final Fantasy VIII is going to sell more than three copies. (The next Metal Gear game won't do so badly, either.)
9. Alien Resurrection is a little overdue. Maybe it takes a while to make the game as hokey as the movie.
10. Activision announced they're working on the sequel to Vigilante 8. Expect to see real-time light-sourcing, Gouraud shading, a beefier polygon count and extensive use of motion capture—and that's just in John Torque's afro.

News Bits

Fight Postponed

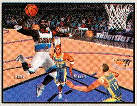
THE FACTS: Fox Interactive has nixed plans to produce a PlayStation version of Aliens Vs. Predator so the developers can focus on the PC version. It may reappear at a later date, but for now it's on indefinite hold.

THE RUB: It's bad that this title (which, just by looking at the name, could've kicked some major ass) has been put on hold. But then again, if they decide to start it up when PlayStation 2's around, it'd be that much better.

Labor Woes Continue?

THE FACTS: 989 Studios announced that NBA ShootOut '99 has been cancelled.

THE RUB: Don't they know the NBA strike is over?



Bat Attack

THE FACTS: Ubi Soft has signed a deal with Warner Brothers Interactive that will bring Batman to the small screen in new video game adventures for multiple systems, including PlayStation. The games will begin hitting the market in 2000, and will be based on the popular animated series "The Adventures of Batman and Robin."

THE RUB: It's hard to make a good licensed game. But the Batman animated series is so good, and has such a vast story and universe, that you'd think it wouldn't be difficult to make a great game out of it. We can only hope.

Jungle Fever

THE FACTS: To take some attention away from the return of another video game primate, Sony is preparing a game starring its own jungle hero. Called Ape Escape, this 3D platform game is expected to be part of Sony's summer/fall lineup and will be introduced at E3.

THE RUB: No monkeying around in '99—these two video game apes will go head to head. Sony's entry will reportedly push the PlayStation hardware to new heights of graphic excellence. Bet your bananas on it.

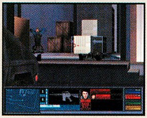
Bloody Good

THE FACTS: A new Mortal Kombat side-story game is in the works. Mortal Kombat: Special Forces stars Sonya and Jax as they chase down Kano and the Black Dragon clan. Gameplay will be set in a 3D environment, where you fight enemies in a Final Fight-ish manner. Special Forces will be released in the fall.

THE RUB: Are Sonya and Jax popular enough Mortal Kombat characters to headline their own game? Perhaps, if the gameplay's good enough. It's good to see this kind of variation inside a single game series. Let's just hope it's not as difficult to play as Mythologies was.

PC Pipeline

THE FACTS: More PC game conversions are coming to PlayStation, including Crusaders of Might & Magic, American Deer Hunter, Rainbow Six and Diablo II.



THE RUB: Are more PC games on consoles a good thing? Only if the gameplay is intact. Besides, who can complain about a Deer Hunting simulation? We can't wait!

Big Robots Incoming

THE FACTS: An official at Bandai told us that Sony has given them the green light to port over Gundam Battle Master 2 and Macross VFX II

THE RUB: Well, that gives anime fans something to be happy about, but we're just crossing our fingers when it comes to the gameplay.

Which of the following applications for the PocketStation do you think you have the most use for?

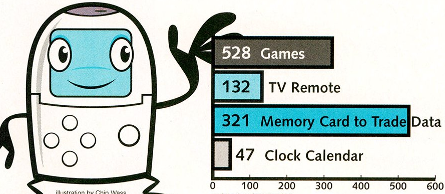


illustration by Chip Wass

total number of votes: 1,028
poll taken by videogames.com

Top 10

Japan's Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

February sales rankings courtesy of *The PlayStation Magazine Weekly*, SOFTBANK:

1. **Super Hero Battle** Banpresto - RPG
2. **Bass Landing** Ascii - Sports
3. **Sound Novel Evolution 3** Chunsoft - Adventure
4. **Crash Bandicoot 3** SCEI - Action
5. **Beatmania** Konami - Misc.
6. **Tales of Phantasia** Namco - RPG
7. **Beatmania 3rd Mix** Konami - Misc.
8. **Street Fighter Zero 3** Capcom - Fighting
9. **Bloody Roar 2** Hudson - Fighting
10. **Simple 1500 Series Vol.1: The Mahjong** Culture Publishers - Misc.

U.K.'s Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

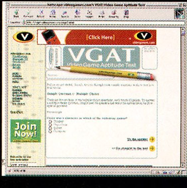
January sales rankings courtesy of *ChartTrack*:

1. **FIFA '99** EA Sports - Sports
2. **Crash Bandicoot 3** Sony CEE - Action
3. **Tomb Raider 3** Eidos - Action
4. **Abe's Exoddus** Oddworld/GT - Action
5. **Brain Lara Cricket** Codemasters - Sports
6. **Crash Bandicoot** (Platinum) Sony - Action
7. **Resident Evil** (Platinum) Virgin - Action
8. **Mickey's Wild Adventure** (Platinum) Sony - Action
9. **Tekken 2** Namco/Sony - Fighting
10. **Rayman** (Platinum) Ubisoft Classique - Action

(Note: Platinum is the U.K. equivalent of Greatest Hits domestically.)

Get a Ph.D. in Video Gaming

Think you know video games? Been around since Pac-Man ruled the pixel playground? Know Crash Bandicoot better than anyone? Maybe you're good enough to make the grade on videogames.com's Video Game Aptitude Test (VGAT). It's just like taking those Iowa Tests or the SATs, only it tests how well you know video gaming. Sharpen your pencils and point your Web browser of choice to http://vgat.videogames.com.



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PlayStation

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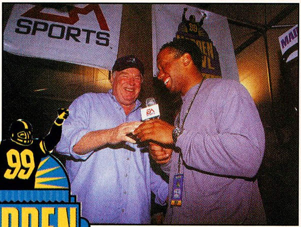
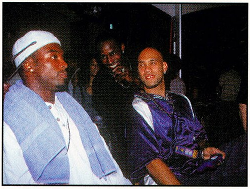
Madden Bowl a Hit on South Beach



Jamal Anderson hooped it up with a rather casually dressed John Madden.

The Super Bowl always plays host to a series of special football-related events before the actual game, and Electronic Arts' Madden Bowl has been one of them for the past five years. Held on the Thursday before Super Bowl Sunday, Madden Bowl '99 took place in the All Star Café in South Beach, just outside Miami.

The beach-side, festive setting helped precipitate what was easily the best and most attended Madden Bowl ever. Pro Bowl running back Jamal Anderson and commentator John Madden hosted the event, but the list of athletes attending and competing seemed endless. It included the previous Madden Bowl champion, actor Morris Chestnut, baseball player Derek Bell, and popular football players such as Ravens wide receiver Jermaine Lewis, Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver Derrick Alexander and New England Patriots running back Robert Edwards. Other notable players that didn't make the cut were Green Bay Packers wide receiver Antonio Freeman, San Francisco 49ers wide receiver Terrell Owens, New York Giants corner back Jason Sehorn and Oakland Raiders corner back Charles Woodson.

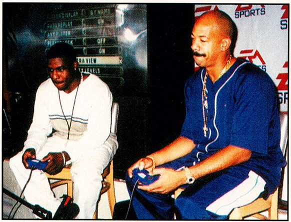


Derrick Alexander (right) gives the eye after a play.

Interestingly enough, most players didn't use the team they played for in real life, and instead opted to use one of the powerhouse teams in the game, such as the Green Bay Packers or Denver Broncos. This worked reasonably well for Green Bay receiver Antonio Freeman, who often heaved balls deep to himself in the game. Unfortunately, he couldn't complete enough of them to get very far in the tournament.

The biggest surprise in the contest was that Morris Chestnut, the previous Madden Bowl champion, was eliminated immediately by New York defensive back Ray Mickens. Also of interest was Astros outfielder Derek Bell (the first MLB player to enter the Madden Bowl), who showed remarkable prowess at playing Madden NFL 99. According to Bell, he plays "the hell out of the game" by himself when he's on the road during the baseball season. Not only did he excel at the game, but he made sure everyone else in the venue knew he did too. Talking trash was as much a part of his game as his long-ball, quick-strike offense. After a good play, Bell could often be found taunting the competition by exchanging high-fives and pouring on additional points to embarrass outmatched competition.

Bell's dominance in the tournament ended when he lost in a pass-laden shootout with the calmer, more sportsman-like New York defensive back Ray Mickens. The final score was 35–21, although the game was closer than the score implied. Mickens' celebration consisted of his showing Jamal Anderson his own version of the popular "Dirty Bird" end-zone celebration.



Party Tidbits

During the tournament, Terrell Owens was heard complaining about wide receivers not dropping to the turf to catch passes. They do this in the NFL a lot to give defensive backs little chance of picking the ball off.

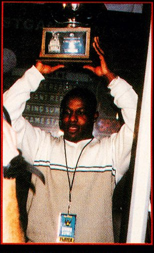
Lots of players still play Madden NFL 98. Maybe they still love "V-Polys."

Surprisingly, a lot of the wide receivers playing Madden emphasized the need for a good running game. Perhaps that's because play-action fakes help them get wide-open.

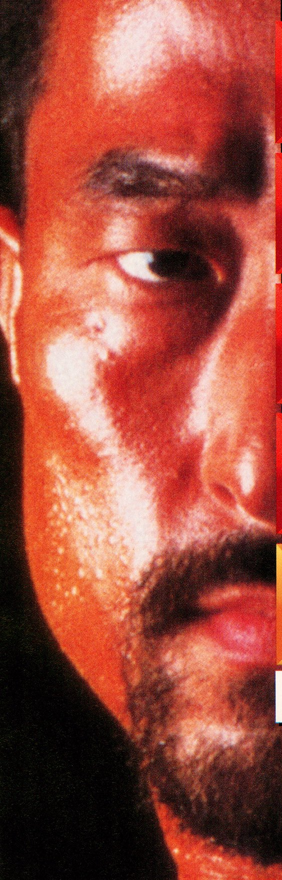
A lot of them complained they weren't very good at running the ball. Which is why they are wide receivers.

The tournament games were set at Arcade Mode in part so that it would be easier to run the ball.

Lots of players showed up at the door to get into the tournament at the last minute. Most of them let their agents do the dirty work, like Derek Bell.



Ray Mickens raises his trophy after his victory over Derek Bell.



KARATE

KENPO

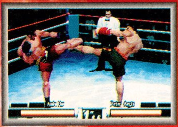
KICKBOXING

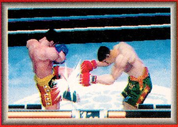
KUNG-FU

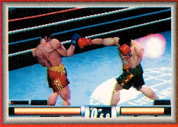
K-1 REVENGE

K-1 REVENGE *combines all forms of* **MARTIAL ARTS** *in a raucus type of fighting simulation that combines the special moves and combos of the best fighting games with the gritty realism only possible when the action is based on the true life capabilities of* ***ACTUAL K-1 FIGHTERS.***

The "K" of K-1 refers to the main disciplines that are represented in K-1: Karate, Kickboxing, Kung-Fu & Kenpo. The "1" represents the fact that this is an open weight-class fighting sport and also the champion is truly #1, the best.







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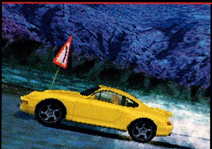

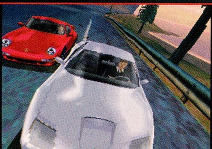

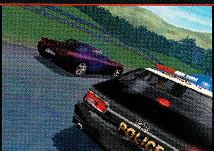

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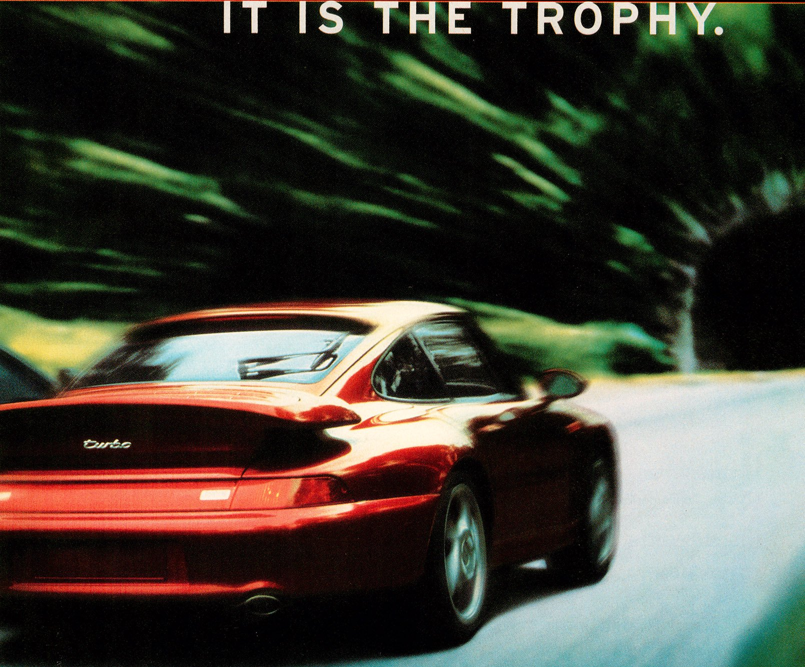

The price you pay for losing isn't just pride. It's your 396 hp exotic. Watch for nasty hairpins. Aggressive opponents who might damage your baby. And, of course, the cops. They all want to see you lose it in a very big way.

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ELECTRONIC ARTS™

Top 20

The best-selling U.S. PlayStation titles as reported by the nation's top retailers

1 WCW/nWo Thunder ●○○○○

Publisher: THQ **Last Month:** – **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Jan. 1999

Wrestling fans seem to be willing to overlook this game's poor rating. Looks like a hot license can still carry a title—if it involves big, sweaty men.

2 Metal Gear Solid ●●●●●

Publisher: Konami **Last Month:** 3 **Genre:** Adventure **Release Date:** Oct. 1998

No surprise here. *OPM*'s pick for best game of 1998 belongs in every gamer's library.

3 Frogger ●●◐○○

Publisher: Hasbro **Last Month:** 13 **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Oct. 1997

The combination of bargain price and retro-gaming action has helped this oldie hop back into the top five.

4 Gran Turismo ●●●●●

Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** 11 **Genre:** Racing **Release Date:** May 1998

This racing game can lap the competition several times over. But will R4 slow GT's sales?

5 Crash Bandicoot: WARPED ●●●●●

Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** 1 **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Oct. 1998

The final—and best—Crash game combines so many different genres that it's sure to please most gamers.

			Publisher	Last Month	Release Date
6	**Knockout Kings**	●●●◐○	EA	10	Oct. 1998
7	**Spyro the Dragon**	●●●●○	SCEA	16	Sept. 1998
8	**Crash Bandicoot 2**	●●	SCEA	6	Oct. 1997
9	**A Bug's Life**	●●○○○	SCEA	8	Dec. 1998
10	**Cool Boarders 3**	●●●○○	989 Studios	18	Oct. 1998
11	**Cool Boarders 2**	●●●●○	SCEA	–	Nov. 1997
12	**Tomb Raider**	●●●●○	Eidos	20	Nov. 1996
13	**NASCAR 99**	●●●●○	EA	5	Sept. 1998
14	**Madden NFL 99**	●●●●◐	EA	7	Aug. 1998
15	**Tomb Raider III**	●●●◐○	Eidos	2	Nov. 1998
16	**PlayStation Underground JamPack Winter**		SCEA	–	Oct. 1998
17	**Twisted Metal III**	●●◐○○	989 Studios	4	Oct. 1998
18	**NCAA March Madness 99**	●●●○○	EA	–	Jan. 1999
19	**NFL GameDay 99**	●●●●○	989 Studios	12	Aug. 1998
20	**NFL Blitz**	●●●●●	Midway	15	Sept. 1998

namco Presents

Top 10 Most Wanted

As compiled by our attractive, intelligent readers

1. **Silent Hill** Prepare to be as scared as we were by Konami's thrilling new adventure game.
2. **R4** Gamers are revving up to power slide their way to racing bliss with Namco's latest.
3. **Syphon Filter** No mere Metal Gear clone, Syphon Filter is innovative enough to stand on its own merits.
4. **Final Fantasy VIII** Mere mention of Square's RPG can cause convulsive drooling in gamers everywhere.
5. **Quake II** They said it couldn't be done on the PlayStation, but all you deathmatchers knew better.
6. **Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver** It's soul-wrenching that we have to wait so long for this oft-delayed game.
7. **WCW/nWo Thunder** We panned this game, but wrestling fans are still clamoring for a copy of this dud.
8. **Ehrgeiz** Cloud, Tifa and Sephiroth together in an awesome fighting game. 'Nuff said.
9. **South Park** With so many horror games out there, it would be nice to see a bit of humor on the PlayStation.
10. **Resident Evil 3** Hey, Capcom—don't let Konami steal all your horror genre glory. Let's see this game soon.

Galo Pesantes' Top 5

Our monthly contest winner's top five picks

1. **Metal Gear Solid** Solid Snake is definitely a solid choice to top any list. Good call, Galo!
2. **Silent Hill** If you want to really experience a fright delight, turn out the lights and play it alone.
3. **Final Fantasy VIII** It's finally out in Japan! Hurry, Square, and bring this one Stateside soon.
4. **Crash Bandicoot: WARPED** Galo threw in some lighter fare among so many heavy games.
5. **Xenogears** Religion and technology, mechs and martial arts—what more could you want in an RPG?

Editors' Top 5

What we've been playing instead of working

1. **Point Blank 2** It's a lot more fun to snipe at targets than at each other during those stressful deadlines.
2. **Final Fantasy VIII** We got our Japanese copy of this one right on deadline—and we can't stop playing it.
3. **Ehrgeiz** As if the fighting weren't enough, Square threw in great minigames and a killer Quest Mode.
4. **IQ Final** We've been passing a controller back and forth trying to solve some of the peskier puzzles.
5. **Rollcage** This dizzying racer has pushed realistic racing sims into the back seat this month.

Send your votes for the Readers' 10 Most Wanted games to: *Official PlayStation Magazine* Attn: Readers' 10 Most Wanted, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail us at: dan_peluso@zd.com or visit the *OPM* section on www.videogames.com

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games, January 1999. Call them at (516) 625-2345 for questions regarding this list. Note: No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Sega Saturn, etc.) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions are written by the *OPM* staff.

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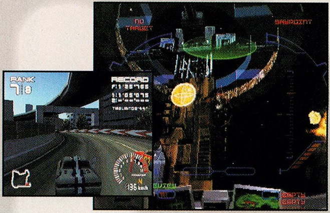
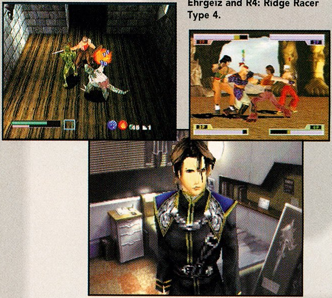
Coming Soon

Compiled by Dan Peluso with no help at all from Johnny Masthead





Clockwise from top right: G-Police: Weapons of Justice, Shao Lin, Final Fantasy VIII, Ehrgeiz and R4: Ridge Racer Type 4.

April

3Xtreme	989 Studios	Sports
All-Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	Sports
Attack of the Saucerman	Psygnosis	Action
Baseball 2000	Interplay	Sports
Black Bass w/Blue Marlin	Hot B	Sports
Bomberman Fantasy Race	Atlus	Racing
Clock Tower II: The Struggle Within	AGETEC	Adventure
Kawasaki Motocross	Activision	Racing
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete	Working Designs	RPG
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	RPG
Omikron: The Nomad Soul	Eidos	Action
Point Blank 2	Namco	Action
R-Types	AGETEC	Action
RC Stunt Copter	Midway	Action
Shao Lin	THQ	Action
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	Fighting
Tomorrow Never Dies	MGM Interactive	Action
T.R.A.G.	Sunsoft	Action
Warzone 2100	Eidos	Strategy
Xena Warrior Princess	Sony CEA	Action

May

American Deer Hunter	Interplay	Misc.
Broken Sword: The Smoking Mirror	THQ	Adventure
Ehrgeiz	Square	Fighting
G-Police Weapons of Justice	Psygnosis	Action
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	Action
Gungage	Konami	Action
Jeff Gordon XS Racing	ASC Games	Racing
Looney Tunes: Lost in Time	Infogrames	Action
Rally Racing	Konami	Sports
Vermin	Eidos	Action
WWF Attitude	Acclaim	Sports

Future Releases

Ace Combat 3	Namco	Action
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Action
Ape Escape	Sony CEA	Action
Centipede	Hasbro Interactive	Action
Chocobo's Dungeon 2	Square	RPG
Chocobo Racing	Square	Racing
Croc 2	Fox Interactive	Action
Crusaders of Might and Magic	3DO	RPG
Destruction Derby 3	Psygnosis	Racing
Diabolical Adventures of Tobu	989 Studios	Action
D.I.R.T.	TBA	Sports
Earthworm Jim 3D	Take 2 Interactive	Action
Fighter Maker	AGETEC	Fighting

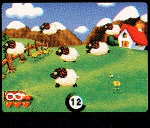
Future Releases (cont.)

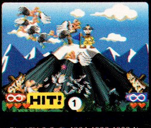
Final Fantasy VIII	Square	RPG
Final Fantasy Anthology	Square	RPG
Grand Theft Auto London	Rockstar	Action
High Heat Baseball 2000	3DO	Sports
Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine	Activision	Adventure
Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster	Midway	Action
Jade Cocoon: Story of the Tamamayu	Crave	RPG
Michael Owen's World League Soccer	TBA	Sports
Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	Midway	Action
NFL Xtreme 2	989 Studios	Sports
Quake 2	Activision	Action
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	Racing
Rainbow Six	Red Storm	Action
Rat Attack!	Mindscape	Action
Rayman 2	Ubi Soft	Action
Railroad Tycoon 2	Rockstar	Strategy
Soul of the Samurai	Konami	Action
Star Ixiom	Namco	Action
Star Ocean: The Second Story	Sony CEA	RPG
Suikoden II	Konami	RPG
Superman	Titus	Action
Tiny Tank: Up Your Arsenal	TBA	Action
UnJammer Lammy	Sony CEA	Action

All release dates are tentative and subject to change. More information on all future releases will be given as it becomes available.

Wild game, baby.

Next party, lose the piñata. New Point Blank™ 2 allows up to 8 of your gun-crazed pals to unload on over 70 wild and wacky shooting scenarios - from fish and fowl to ninjas and gangsters. Blast through an all-new Arcade Mode, Theme Park Mode, Endurance Mode - plus a VS. Mode for the perfect head-to-head (no pun intended) party game. Point Blank 2. Time to get pistol whipped.





Point Blank™ 2

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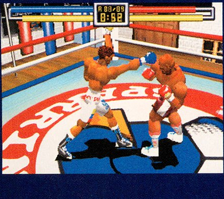
Holy Mackerel, even my hair hurts.



Introducing, Contender. The brutally fun boxing game.

Boxing isn't pretty. In Contender, you'll face 40 different thugs, all with their own look and fighting style. You can throw jabs, combinations and arcade-style knockout punches. Plus, you can build up the strength of your favorite fighter, save it to a memory card, and pummel a friend later. In short, it's a good old-fashioned, mano-a-mano slugfest.

CONTENDER™

The Year of

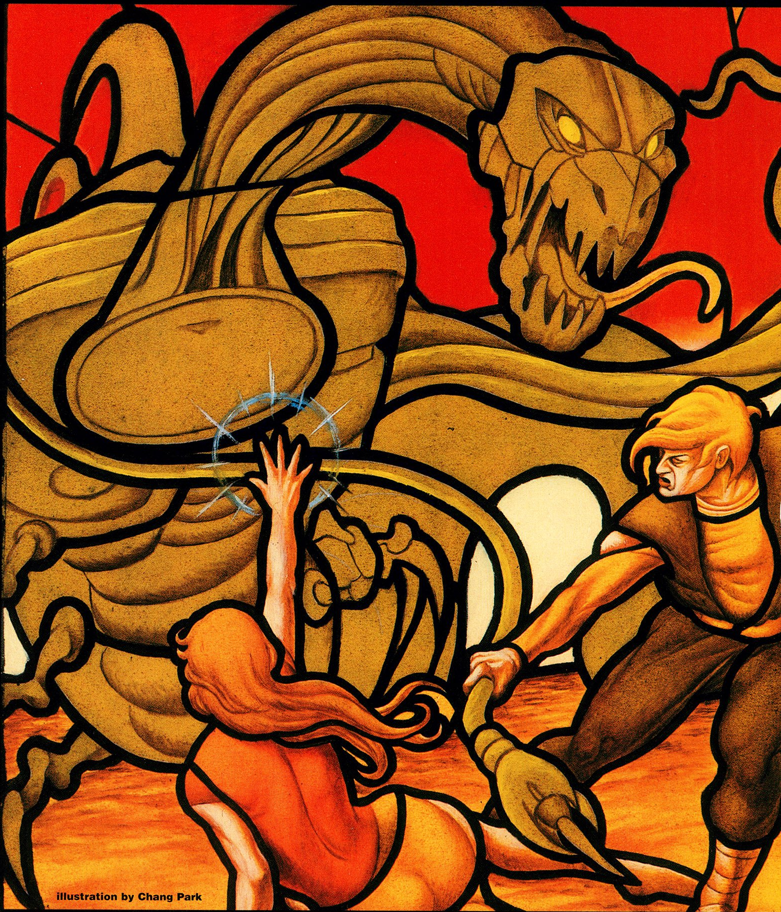


illustration by Chang Park

the RPG

by Mark MacDonald and Joe Rybicki

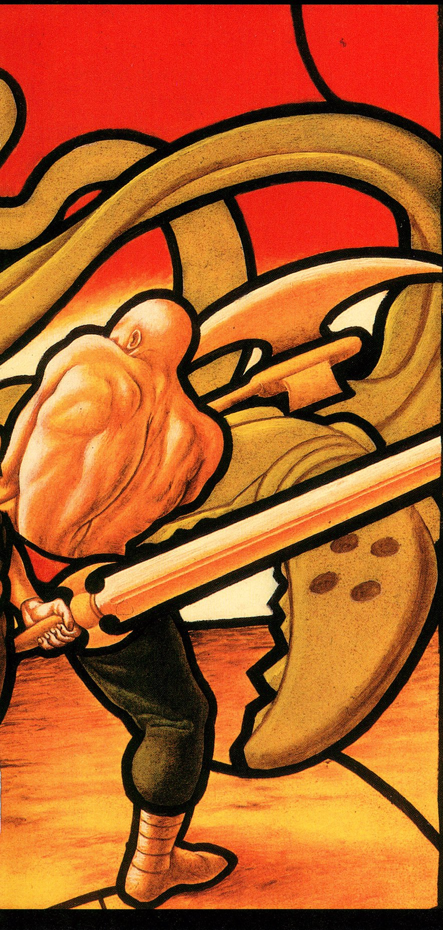
Two months ago, as we here at *OPM* decided the winners in our annual Editors' Awards, one category seemed to be lacking in nominees more than any other. No, not worst game of the year—there were all too many titles to choose from for that honor. The category was Best RPG.

Sure, the winner, Xenogears, is a great game—in fact all the nominees (Brave Fencer Musashi, Alundra and Tales of Destiny) are quality titles. But it became apparent that as far as quality traditional RPGs—not the heavily action or strategy flavored varieties—there really wasn't much to choose from during the last year.

But judging from what we see coming in the next few months to the PlayStation, this year's awards are gonna be a whole lot tougher to decide. Although RPGs have long been popular in Japan, it wasn't until the success of Final Fantasy VII that many U.S. game companies found a reason to get interested. Or perhaps we should say reasons: five million of them, in fact—the number of copies Final Fantasy VII for the PlayStation sold worldwide. Suddenly it seems like every company has an RPG on the way—from names associated with the genre like Square, Working Designs and newcomer Crave, to some surprises like Activison and even Sony.

So what does all this mean for you, the PlayStation gamer? That's right: volume, **volume, VOLUME!** As more and more RPGs are brought to the U.S. and competition heats up, the best games in the genre are now almost guaranteed to make it to America, and even niche titles for the hardcore RPG lover have a better chance than ever before.

It's an exciting time to be a PlayStation RPG gamer, but with all these new titles to keep track of, you'll need a guide, someone to help you sort through all the evil overlords, healing potions and frightened townspeople of this next big wave of RPGs. That's what we're here for (*OPM* joined the party)—turn the page and let's begin!



Dragon Quest VII page 56
Dragon Valor page 56
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Final Fantasy VIII

developed by/Square Soft
published by/Square EA **release date/**September
why you should care: The latest in one of the most popular and critically acclaimed RPG series ever made.

A sneak peak of what's sure to be the hottest RPG of the year.

Those lucky Japanese. Those damned lucky Japanese. Since it was released last month, over two and a half million of them have already bought and experienced Square's latest RPG epic, Final Fantasy VIII. We haven't been this jealous since...well, since Final Fantasy VII came out in Japan before it did in the U.S. two years ago. Relief is in sight—Square Electronic Arts has already announced the domestic release of FFVIII, expected September of this year, but for anxious RPG fans that's practically an eternity. So to try to ease the pain, here are details and our impressions from the first few hours we've been able to spend with the import version.

Using the same overall graphical style as Final Fantasy VII—polygonal characters on prerendered backdrops and all-3D battles—part VIII improves greatly on the same basic formula. Gone are the blocky caricatures of people, replaced with detailed and realistic models so that everyone looks just as good outside of combat as in it. Spell effects, lighting and especially the animation—from people motioning as they talk to monsters collapsing to their death—look almost eerily smooth and natural. The jump in the quality of the FMV cutscenes matches these other graphical improvements as well. Imagine the images of Squall and Rinoa pictured above smoothly animating within an equally detailed environment and you can only begin to get an idea of the truly feature film-like quality rendering achieved for this game.

Even more drastically altered from part VII are Final Fantasy VIII's gameplay and combat system. First of all there are no weapons or armor to be bought, sold or equipped for your characters; attack and defense ratings simply increase as you gain levels, and the one weapon you possess for the whole game is periodically upgraded. Anyone who's ever wondered why you win money in most RPGs after beating up a bunch of naked animals running around in the wilderness will be happy to learn that this doesn't happen in FF8; instead you receive a regular stipend that increases as you progress. Magic points are gone; instead you use the draw command (as in "to draw out" rather than "to sketch"—this ain't FF3 ya know!) to suck spells out of enemies and store them to be used at your leisure. Most enemies have at least two or three different spells you can choose to draw from them. Special "draw points" are also scattered around maps much like save points, where you can stop to stock up on a few healing or attack spells without having to take them from enemies.

As opposed to Final Fantasy VII's Materia System, part VIII employs

The PlayStation Role-Player's Guide

If you are looking for something to pass the time until some of these great upcoming RPGs finally come out, take a look at our quick history of the genre on the PlayStation. Whether it's as a mini buyer's guide or just a nostalgic look back, enjoy our take on each and every RPG released so far...

BEYOND THE BEYOND

As the first RPG released in the U.S. for the PlayStation, Beyond the Beyond was less than impressive. Although it did include some great puzzle-dungeons, most of this game was strictly by the book. Not horrible, really, but uninspired and average—nothing that showcased the powers of Sony's new system.

Hilts VP 16 LP 13
Samson VP 11 LP 7
Annie VP 13 LP 15
Edward casts FireLevel1!

the new Junction System. At the center of the new scheme are the Guardian Forces, or GFs. Just like summoning magic from earlier FFs, these are basically powerful spells that call up a "Guardian" to help out the party or to attack the enemy. You may even remember some of them from the past games—Effrit with his flaming attack, Shiva and her ice spell, or the deadly Bahamut. Well this time around, not only do the GFs cast huge (and quite beautiful, we might add) spells, but in many ways they are almost like separate characters themselves. After a GF is equipped, or "junctioned," to a party member, it gains experience points from battle, gains levels, takes damage and even has its own hit points just like any other character. Having a GF brings so many benefits, it's practically a must that each player "junction" to at least one. Characters need to equip a GF to be able to use items or cast spells, as well as to receive other abilities and attributes (for example, increasing that person's hit points or magic power).

Another use for the GFs are in FFVIII's card game minigame, which various people will challenge you to throughout your quest. The basic game is a sort of combination of Othello and the card game war; each card has four numbers, one for each direction (top, bottom, left and right). The object is to take turns placing your cards so that they have a higher number on each side than any card bordering them. If you win you can capture opponents' cards and keep them for future games, but by the same token each time you play you risk losing and having to forfeit your own cards.

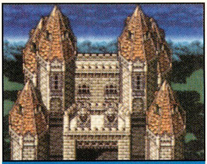
We know there's more, much more, to Final Fantasy VIII that we haven't seen yet—we're only on disc one of four—but already it's clear that Square is up to something very special. Whether all the new gameplay alterations will work within the overall game is still unclear, but we can't wait to play more and find out

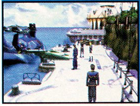
Final Fantasy Anthology

developed by/Square Soft
published by/Square EA **release date/**late '99
why you should care: Two great games—one a classic worth revisiting and the other never before seen in the U.S.

For those of you who know little of the Final Fantasy series before FFVII, here's a brief history. The first game was released in America and Japan under the same name, "Final Fantasy," but parts two and three never made it over here. So Japan's FFIV then became "Final Fantasy II" in the U.S., number five was another sequel that never made it over, so when part six was released out here it was as "Final Fantasy III." Confused? You aren't the only one—which is probably why Square finally decided to stop this madness once and for all by releasing Final Fantasy VII under the same name in the U.S. and Japan.

But enough history, let's get back to the matter at hand. FF Anthology is two games in one—FFV and FFVI—with the same graphics and music they originally had on the Super Nintendo. Yes, rendered cutscenes have been added to the intro and endings of the games, but updating for today's audiences isn't the point of this collection; rather, it's for fans of the series to relive some of the best RPGs ever, to allow new fans of the series to get caught up without hunting down an old system and carts, and for both to be able to finally play Final Fantasy V. Never before released in America and yet





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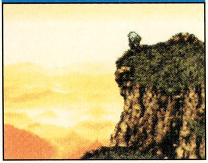

A few breathtaking scenes from Final Fantasy VIII, and a step back in time with Final Fantasy V (top right) and VI (bottom right) from the upcoming Anthology.

SUIKODEN

Considered a classic by many, Konami's first PlayStation RPG follows the story of a young nobleman forced to make some difficult choices and eventually lead a revolution. With 108 different characters and occasional army-sized battles, Suikoden isn't your typical RPG.

PERSONA

An often overlooked but high-quality title, Persona took the RPG out of its usual medieval setting and into the modern world. Players controlled a group of high school students through 3D real-world dungeons, following an intricate story line of demon possession and alternate universes. Unorthodox to say the least, but with enough depth to reward the hardcore RPG player willing to find it.

Driving on the ground is so 90's.

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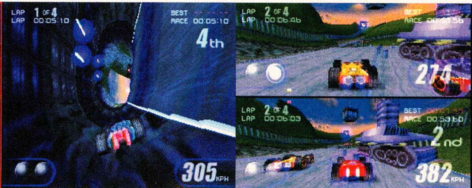
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BEST
RACE 00:05:10
4th
305 KPH
LAP 2 OF 4
LAP 00:06:46
274
LAP 2 OF 4
LAP 00:06:03
BEST
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2nd
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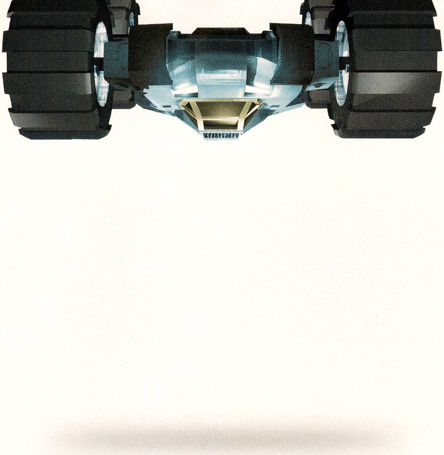

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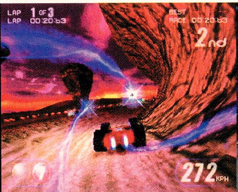
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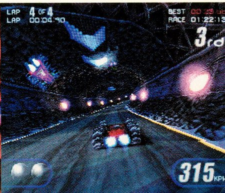
2nd
272 KPH


LAP 4 OF 4
LAP 00:04:90
BEST
RACE 01:22:1
3r
315

still touted by many as the best-playing Final Fantasy of them all, Final Fantasy V may be graphically dated, but its incredibly deep gameplay and unique "job" system makes it more worthy of your time than many new RPGs. This is the kind of rerelease that all too often doesn't make it over the Pacific; kudos to Square EA for making it happen (but what happened to FFIV?).

Lunar: Silver Star Story

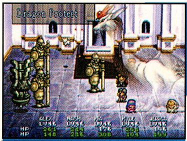
developed by/Game Arts
published by/Working Designs **release date/**April
why you should care: The best the old-school RPG has to offer, polished to shine on the PlayStation.

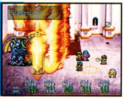
Unlike Final Fantasy Anthology, which is content to rerelease its games in their original form, Lunar: Silver Star Story is somewhat of a rerelease and makeover in one. Despite being originally created for the doomed Sega-CD system almost seven years ago, Lunar and its sequel won a devoted following among RPG enthusiasts that still survives today. The combination of sharp 2D graphics, animated cutscenes, classic battle sequences, incredible CD soundtrack and detailed story yielded the best the old school RPGs had to offer, all rolled in to one. For the PlayStation version, the basic game has remained the same (the characters, the world they inhabit, the overall plot, etc), but many of the details have been shifted or improved on. The most obvious change would be the graphics—everything has been redrawn or redesigned to take advantage of the PlayStation's graphical power. Most of the dialogue and story line has also been tweaked—in fact more than 80 percent of the script has been completely rewritten, which guarantees some surprises for even the most devout fan of the original. Toss in all new music, new voices and other extras like a cloth map and bonus arranged soundtrack CD, and you can see why Lunar placed second only to Final Fantasy VIII in our poll of the most anticipated RPGs.

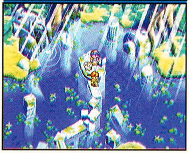
Star Ocean: The Second Story

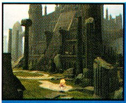
developed by/Enix
published by/Sony CEA **release date/**June
why you should care: A promising combination of some recent and more traditional RPG elements.

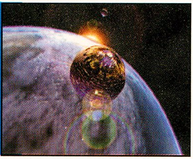
Astute readers may remember our predicting this one way back in our November issue last year, but now it's official—Star Ocean: The Second Story is on its way to America, courtesy of none other than Sony themselves. The second in a series of games from RPG masters Enix, Star Ocean was a huge hit in Japan when it was released there last year, and it's not hard to see why. With its beautiful rendered backdrops and familiar cute 2D characters, Star Ocean's graphics strike a pleasant balance between old and new RPG styles. Players can choose between two characters at the start of the game, which doesn't affect the overall plot but can affect some smaller events and also which other characters you meet later in the game. Another unique aspect of Star Ocean is combat, which may look like the standard turn-based variety but actually is much more action-oriented, with the player moving around

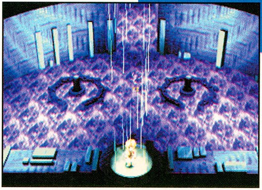












Three pics each from Lunar: Silver Star Story (far left) and the newly announced Star Ocean: The Second Story.

WILD ARMS

the first RPG to employ 3D polygon battles on the PlayStation, coupled with a long (if uninspired) quest, Wild Arms was initially well received but quickly overshadowed by Final Fantasy VII.

FINAL FANTASY VII

By far the biggest RPG yet for the PlayStation, the first Final Fantasy in 3D captivated gamers worldwide, selling more than five million copies. Incredible graphics, awesome minigames, memorable characters and a dramatic and massive story made FFVII a hit even with gamers who don't normally play RPGs. Its incredible success helped the PlayStation achieve market dominance and showed many other developers the sales potential of a great RPG even outside of Japan.

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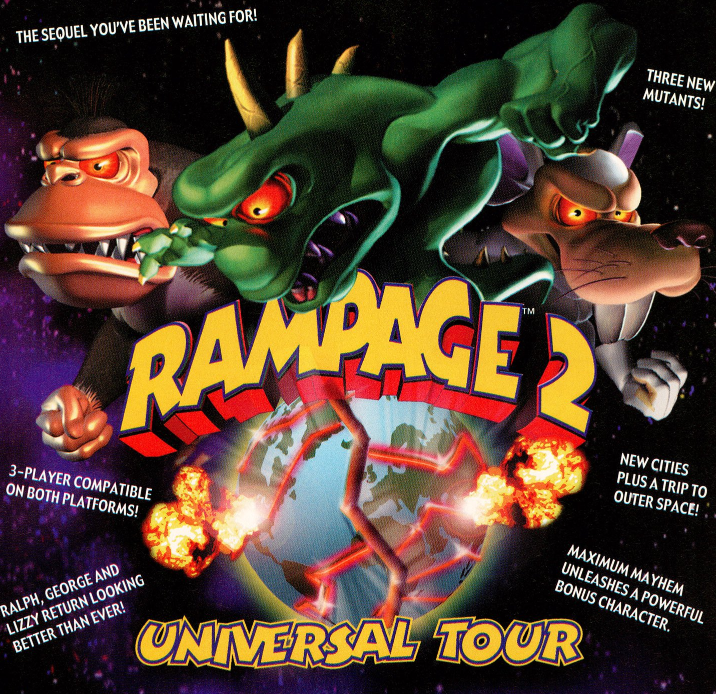

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Thousand Arms (right) maintains a mostly lighthearted feel, while Suikoden II (below) takes a slightly darker, more serious approach.

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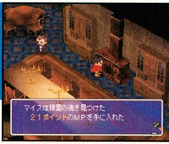
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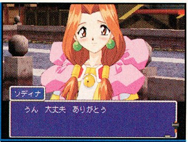
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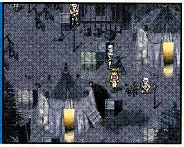

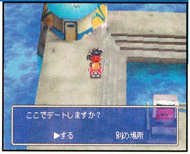
ここでデートしますか？

freely before attacking and directing his/her fellow party members. Star Ocean has just been announced, so look for more in the upcoming months as Sony gears up for its U.S. release.

Suikoden II

developed by/Konami
published by/Konami **release date/**Q2 1999
why you should care: It looks enough like the first Suikoden to virtually guarantee satisfaction for fans of the original

More of the Same" seems to be the theme for Suikoden II. Not only does the game's story seem virtually identical to the original (boy rebel fights evil empire), but there's the same number of characters (108), the same graphical style (almost entirely sprite-based), and so on.

There have been *some* changes made, of course. Perhaps most promising are the adjustments to both the encounter battles and the large-scale strategic battles. For the encounters, Konami has concentrated on including more opportunities for players to team up characters for special attacks. The ability to combine two or more characters' individual attacks in a single devastating barrage added a welcome element of strategy to the standard encounters. Suikoden II looks to further stress the strategic side of things.

With this in mind, Konami has also revamped the large-scale battles to provide a bit more significant challenge. Players will now need to take charge of positioning their troops and carry out the battle on a level slightly more involved than "Archers attack now." It looks like the battles are still thrown in primarily for variety's sake, but any improved challenge will be welcome.

Right now, the question looks to be whether the game will be *different* enough from the original to suit fans. Only time will tell.

Thousand Arms

developed by/Red Company
published by/Atlus **release date/**N/A
why you should care: An unusual visual style and a lighthearted feel give the game an unusual atmosphere

Only the current RPG-friendly atmosphere would allow a game like Thousand Arms a chance of seeing the U.S. on the PlayStation, and we should be grateful for that chance. Thousand Arms is an unusual adventure that starts with a graphical style that combines detailed sprites with polygonal backgrounds, sometimes even mixing the two types of animation for some truly unusual-looking effects.

This all serves as the vehicle for a story that includes such unlikely elements as a dating simulator similar to the sort of thing that's been popular in Japan for years (our hero, Meis Triumph, is described as being easily distracted in the presence of a girl). Much of the dialogue is delivered via spoken text, a long-overdue development for the genre that designers are finally starting to implement.

Perhaps because of the game's unusual features, Atlus still has not confirmed the U.S. release of Thousand Arms, but so far the prospects look favorable. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

SAGA FRONTIER

The latest in the long line of Romancing Saga games from Square, Saga Frontier never quite lived up to its legacy. The idea of choosing from a number of different characters, each with their own storylines and subquests was great, but the game itself had too many problems. With its lackluster graphics, and awkward gameplay and combat system, Saga just didn't have what it takes to stand out after Final Fantasy VII.

BREATH OF FIRE 3

Continuing Capcom's only RPG series, the latest was rather slow to start and proved inaccessible to many would-be RPG gamers. In most respects quite mediocre, but it is still loved by die-hard fans.

It's anyone who starts a sentence, "When I was your age..."
It's your parents when they say, "Why couldn't you be more like your brother?"
It's the cop who gave you the jaywalking ticket.
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Legend of Legaia

developed by/Contrail
published by/SCEA
release date/March

PlayStation
Legend of Legaia

1 Player
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

An extensive, innovative and varied adventure

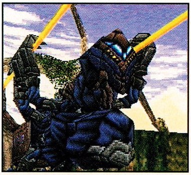
SCEA's newest RPG is surprising in a lot of ways. Legend of Legaia has been associated with Wild Arms from early on by virtue of a shared producer and the fact that both are SCEA games; one of the surprises is that Legaia is so much more innovative a game than Wild Arms. The Arts system, in which characters acquire new abilities after executing a specific sequence of attacks, is an excellent idea; it allows players to not only discover new special attacks, but also design custom combos by hooking attacks together, for devastating results. Also of notable ingenuity is the magic system. Characters must deliver the killing blow to certain types of monsters—and kill them without using magic—to stand a chance of earning the monster's magical skill. So, while the system may not at first glance look all that different from other polygonal combat systems, the briefest look below the surface shows that the battle engine, which is the heart and soul of most console RPGs, is quite fresh and interesting, and the impressive variety adds a great deal of strategy.

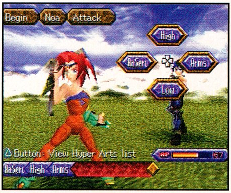
Also surprising—for a native Japanese title—is the completely adept writing and translation. Not only is the script almost entirely free of glaring errors, but much of the writing is laugh-out-loud hysterical. The game consistently returns to the interplay between the naive, brazen Noa and the quiet, straight-faced Gala, and it just gets funnier every time.

Of course, the game has its fair share of flaws and irritations, but these, at least, shouldn't be surprising to fans of console RPGs. Most irritating are the too-frequent random battles. These wouldn't be so frustrating if the battle process did not take so excruciatingly long. When you literally plan out every move, battles can take awhile (your characters can select their own attacks if you wish, but this doesn't make enough of a difference to justify the risk). Add *extremely* long summoning-style spells for even the most simple and often-used magics and you start to see where a good part of the game's 50-plus hours go.

Still, the huge world, extensive story and impressive variety make Legend of Legaia an easy candidate for the top choice among this most recent batch of U.S. RPGs.

— Joe Rybicki





Noa: There's some weird hair growing under your nose

Noa
Bird Step
Golem

Ender LV24
HP 1910/1910
MP 230/ 230
Noa LV23
HP 1198/1198
MP 170/ 170
Gala LV22
HP 1320/1320
MP 249/ 249

Players literally plan each and every move during battle (above), trying new combinations for special attacks.

Pros
- Innovative battle system
- Entirely adept writing
- Huge world and extensive story
- Impressive variety overall

Cons
- Too-frequent random battles
- Battles take much too long

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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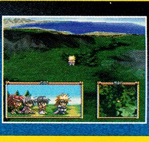
Rating

GRANSTREAM SAGA

Featuring attractive polygon graphics, anime cutscenes and almost fighting-game like battles, this action-tilted RPG loses a lot for its uninspired, if well-presented, plot.

TALES OF DESTINY

The sequel to Namco's Tales of Phantasia (which was also recently rereleased for the PlayStation in Japan), ToD combined old-school 2D graphics and cartoony characters with a unique real-time combat system. Not for everyone, but heaven for the nostalgic RPG gamer.



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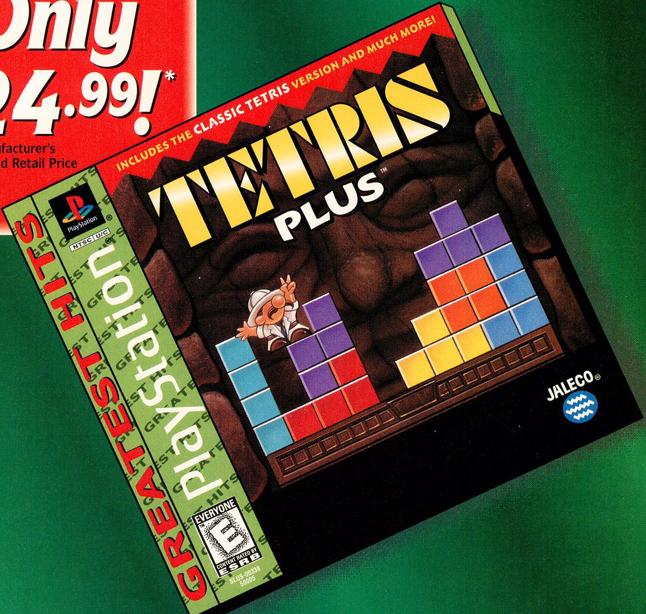
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Guardian's Crusade

developed by/Tamsoft
published by/Activision
release date/March

PlayStation
Guardian's Crusade
Activision

1 Player

Memory Card 1 block

Analog Control Compatible

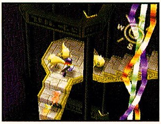
Vibration Function Compatible

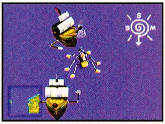
A decent diversion, but never lives up to its own potential

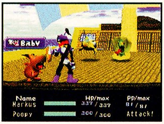
When I first heard Activison was bringing this RPG (originally called Knight and Baby) from Japan, I was curious but wary. Curious because I knew little of the game except that it was a somewhat different take on RPGs, but wary since I knew that the developers, Tamsoft, were the same people responsible for the Toshinden fighting games. Not that Toshinden was so terrible, really, but the last two seemed to be going downhill in quality and I wondered how much these guys would know about how to make a good RPG anyway. Luckily they know more than I would have guessed, but not enough to follow through on some good ideas and make Guardian's Crusade truly memorable.

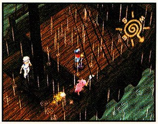
The graphics remind me of claymation—they have a colorful, unique style and the animation is fluid—but sometimes the characters and backgrounds blur the line between simplistic and ugly. As far as the storyline goes, Guardian's Crusade only rarely delves into it very deep, but all the dialogue and comments are well done, interesting and often funny without feeling forced. It definitely says something about the writing when you are still looking at every flowerpot 12 hours into the game just to see what it will say.

The main problem with Guardian's Crusade is that in many ways it teases you with the illusion of depth, but ultimately doesn't deliver. Your interaction with your ever-present companion monster "Baby," for starters, sounds really interesting until you learn how simple it really is. Yes, you can have Baby fetch items for you, but it's hardly worth the effort; your interaction ends up more like maintenance to keep him/her/it happy and attacking the enemy instead of you. The transformations Baby learns are a great idea, but unfortunately you don't have control over what or if it morphs into anything until the last quarter or so of the game. The Living Toys you gather and use for offensive and defensive effects like spells are another fresh take on an old idea, but only a fraction of them really end up being consistently useful. Finally, the world of Guardian's Crusade at first appears to be a huge, expansive land, but the whole game is easily finished in under 20 hours. For any RPG, that's skirting the low end of the scale, and for Guardian's Crusade it's just another area that could have made a decent game great. ***— Mark MacDonald***

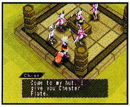




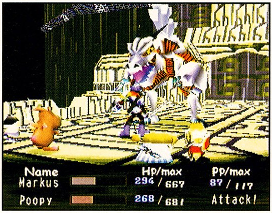




Guardian's Crusade lets you see your enemies as you travel (above) so you can avoid repetitive monster encounters.



Come to my hut. I give you Chester Flute.



Pros
- Some great gameplay ideas
- Entertaining characters and dialogue
- Living Toys!

Cons
- Not enough depth
- Over too quick
- Simple graphics

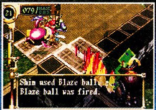
Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ○ ○

Rating

AZURE DREAMS

A combination of many different genres—action, RPG, simulation, strategy and Tamagotchi monster raising—Azure Dreams never quite gelled. Capturing and raising monsters to help you fight was great, as was the game's one town you helped build as the story progressed, but the randomly generated dungeons you spent most your time exploring were boring to look at and, eventually, boring to journey through. An interesting experiment, though, and probably worth it for some RPG fanatics.



Shin used Blaze ball.
Blaze ball was fired.

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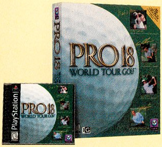
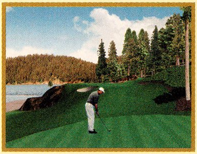
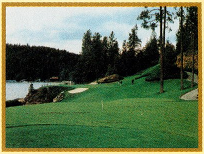




Pro 18's 3rd hole, Coeur d'Alene



Actual 3rd hole, Coeur d'Alene

> "Honestly, if you're playing the course and you're playing the game, there is no difference!"
>
> **—Bill Reagan,**
> **General Manager,**
> **The Coeur D'Alene Resort**

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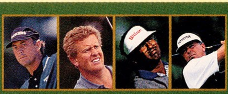

Lehman • Montgomerie • Singh • O'Meara

PRO 18
WORLD TOUR GOLF

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Shadow Madness

developed by/Craveyard
published by/Crave
release date/April

PlayStation
SHADOW MADNESS
CRAVE

1 Player
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

A wonderful story, but without enough game to back it up

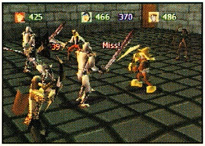
All the big console RPGs in America today are, without exception, imports from Japan. The genre is almost like the TV manufacturing industry; born in America, both moved off to Japan where they were so successful their production in their homeland eventually dried up completely. So as the first traditional RPG (Legacy of Kain was more of an action/RPG) for the PlayStation made by and for Westerners, Shadow Madness is somewhat of an anomaly. The question is, do the Yanks still have what it takes? The answer is, well, yes and no.

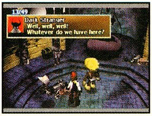
Ironically, Shadow Madness borrows much of its basic structure from recent popular import RPGs, especially Final Fantasy VII. The graphical style is the same (3D characters on prerendered backgrounds), certain spells use a very similar effect to FFVII's summoning magic, and the battles are obviously heavily influenced by the Square classic. With that in mind, the team at Crave has improved on and tweaked certain areas of play, while falling short elsewhere.

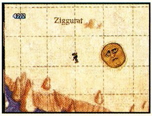
The storyline is by far Shadow Madness' strongest suit. The plot unfolds slowly and naturally, keeping the player interested like a great book or any good RPG tries to do. The writing is often above even the best translated works, alternating between disturbing and humorous themes, and sometimes even both at the same time. The music also stands out in its variety and ability to shift moods perfectly in unison with the game.

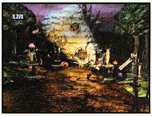
Where Shadow Madness falls short are in its graphics and ultimately, its lack of depth in gameplay. Most of the game appears muddled and sloppy, with lackluster animation and backgrounds that look out of focus. Despite some excellent additions to play mechanics, like an intuitive redesign of the menu process and a battle avoidance system, Shadow Madness also stops short of succeeding in the gameplay department. The enemies lack any consistent challenge that would really force the player to plan or think, which the battle system itself seems like it'd hardly be able to support anyway. Combat is just too straightforward, without anything more to consider than leveling up your characters and the occasional spell.

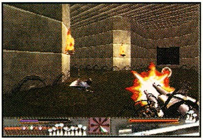
If you appreciate plot and dialogue enough to ignore some weaker elements, Shadow Madness comes recommended. ***— M.M.***



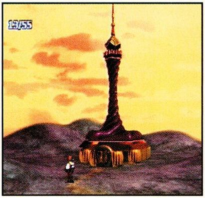








Three minigames break up the action, including this Doom clone (above). Nothing too impressive, but a nice extra.



Pros
- Great writing and story line
- Some interesting small innovations
- Wonderful music sets the mood

Cons
- Shoddy graphics
- Little depth to combat

● ● ◐ ○ ○

Rating

XENOGEARS

Winner of many magazines' best RPG of the year award for 1998, including *OPM*, Xenogears ended up as the must-play RPG of last year. Graphically, it flipped the style of Final Fantasy VII over by using real-time 3D backgrounds and 2D sprite characters. An interesting combo-based fighting system, giant fighting robots, and a deep and involving story that ran 50-plus hours helped Xenogears join well-respected company as one of the best RPGs the PlayStation has seen yet.

THE END...?

Well that brings us up to date on every PlayStation RPG, from past to present. We've come a long way, from Beyond the Beyond to Xenogears, and the future looks even brighter—just check the next page.

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Now that we've covered all the new games being released this month and other Japanese titles already on the way here, we reach further into the future for our Coming Soon list. Some of these games we know are coming, but all of them are still so far off (none have even been released in Japan yet) that details are sketchy. Expect to see full previews of many of these titles in the months ahead.

×ボタンで
ステータス表示に戻ります

JADE COCOON: STORY OF THE TAMAMAYU

Genki

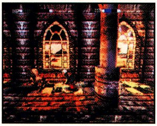
Another title you may remember from our coverage of the last Tokyo Game Show, Jade Cocoon was just announced for U.S. release this month by Crave and is already generating excitement in the press.

With designs and art direction from the same man who worked on the popular animated films *My Neighbor Totoro* and *Princess Mononoke*, JC has a distinct and pleasing style to its 3D characters and 2D background graphics that really grab your eye. You play Levant, a young boy who must learn to capture and train monsters to fulfill his destiny and become the cocoon master of his village, like his father before him. The most interesting part about this is that once you capture two monsters you can combine them to form a new, unique creation based on the "parents" of your new pet.

DRAGON QUEST VII

Enix

The latest in one of the most popular RPG series of all time, DQVII is finally due out in Japan sometime this summer (it was originally scheduled for release almost two years ago), but is still being kept tightly under wraps. What little has been shown has a definite old-school flavor, with cute little sprite characters trailing in a line, one after the other, but the environments are fully 3D, and can be spun around at will by the player (similar to Xenogears). No specifics on the story line or battle system yet, but we expect to see and hear many more details at the Tokyo Game Show next month. You can count on this one to make its way here eventually; the only question now is from what company.



DRAGON VALOR

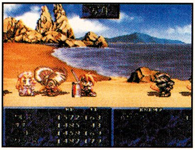
Namco

More of an action/RPG actually, but too exciting not to mention is this sequel to the old 8-bit game Dragonbusters. Dragon Valor is still very early but already shows promise, with its fully 3D polygonal environments and impressive graphics. Setting it apart it in terms of gameplay and story line is how the game follows the lineage of your characters; not only are you given the choice of whom to marry, but you also control your offspring.

TALES OF PHANTASIA

Namco

The prequel to Tales of Destiny, ToP was originally released for the Super Nintendo in Japan but has been updated for the PlayStation thanks to the success of the sequel. Like its sequel, ToP uses old-fashioned sprite graphics and classic dungeon exploration gameplay as its formula, but with a unique fighting system that's almost like a side-scrolling beat-'em-up in many ways. Both games were huge hits in Japan, but no word yet if this game will join Tales of Destiny Stateside.



SAGA FRONTIER 2

Square Soft

As the follow up to last year's disappointing Saga Frontier, SF2 has a lot to make up for. Luckily it looks like Square realizes drastic change was necessary and has gone with an all new revamped look in this sequel. All the graphics have the same soft, watercolor painting look you see here, which is even more impressive in motion. Battles looks great too, with 2D sprites on a revolving 3D field, along with the amazing lighting and spell effects that you expect from Square. Unfortunately, this one isn't on Square EA's schedule yet for U.S. release; if this game turns out as good as it looks, let's hope that changes.

RPG Quick Reference Chart

Game Title:	**Final Fantasy VIII**	**Lunar**	**Final Fantasy Anthology**	**Thousand Arms**	**Legend of Legaia**	**Shadow Madness**	**Guardian's Crusade**
NUMBER OF CD's:	4	2	2	2	1	2	1
RELEASE:	September	April...?	late '99	TBA	March	April	March
GRAPHICS COULD BE DESCRIBED AS:	...whoa	old school 2D	*very* old school 2D	a blend of anime, 2D characters and 3D environments	all 3D, all the time!	like FFVII, as viewed through a blurry, smudged pair of glasses	Gumby meets Wild Arms
MINI-GAMES:	card battle and PocketStation	—	opera singing, mini strategy game	girlfriend hunting	Bust A Groove-style dancing, fishing, slot machines	3D corridor shooting	—
DIALOGUE EXCERPT:	We wouldn't want to spoil anything!	(to chicken) "These darn things wake me every morning...I just want to choke them sometimes!"	"You can't escape... nowhere to run...nowhere to hide..."	"shikashi... hara heta naaa..." ("but...I'm sooo hungry!")	"Vahn, what's a pimp?"	"When...when will this ...st...st... St...op...aaaaa aaaaagh!"	"Welcome to San Claria! The fur fish capitol of the world! Oh, it's you again..."
WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT IT:	take your pick: incredible graphics, stirring music and a huge quest	classic RPG graphics and playability, brought back to life on the PlayStation	two awesome games for the price of one—Final Fantasy V and VI	unusual graphic style (like Xenogears, but cleaner) and spoken dialogue	excellent new battle engine with unusual hand-to-hand and magic systems	awesome story line and some great, quintessential RPG music	cool little touches of originality like the Baby character and Living Toys
WHAT'S NOT SO GOOD:	you'll have to wait six more months	delayed, delayed, delayed—when can we play it?	also two very old games, with nothing new but some bland FMV	it's still not 100% certain that we'll ever see this game in the States	lengthy summonings for even the most basic magic make the battles drag on and on and on	the limited gameplay but especially the graphics—ugh	cool little touches remain little and don't factor into the overall game enough

TEEN
T
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

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LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY WOKE UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE COFFIN.

It's not every day that you're awakened from the dead. Much less to battle scarecrows, zombies and flying clocks for the honor of your kingdom. Poor Sir Dan. He's the undead knight on a gothic quest to avenge the forces of darkness. The dead are now undead. The living are crazed maniacs. And the once-mild-mannered pumpkins are now cold assassins. But Sir Dan's got a mighty arsenal–from crossbows, axes and daggers to lightning rods, swords and the occasional chicken drumstick–to fight his way through a dazzling 3-D journey. Although after being dead for 100 years he probably could just kill them with his morning breath.

MEDIEVIL™

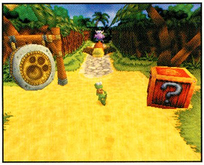
www.playstation.com

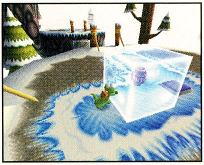
PlayStation®

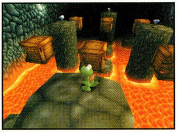
Theme Action	**# of Players** TBD
% Complete 60%	**Availability** Q2 '99
Publisher Fox Interactive	**Developer** Argonaut

Croc 2

PlayStation's premier 3D platformer returns with impressive improvements







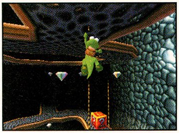
Throughout the game, the levels have a much more open feel.

Step back in time with us for a moment, back just a couple of years, to a time when every Next Best Thing magazine was raving about a game called Mario 64. It was without question one of the most influential games of 1996, and it soon started the inevitable quest for the "Mario-killer."

Along came Croc: Legend of the Gobbos, and while it may not have been that particular Holy Grail, it did have the distinction of being the first free-roaming 3D platformer on the PlayStation. This being the case, it wasn't surprising that the game was plagued by a few irritating characteristics, most notably the claustrophobic, room-based levels that gave the whole game a very limited feel. The sluggish movement of Croc himself didn't help matters; although it actually took longer to get through the levels, it also made the game feel more frustrating.

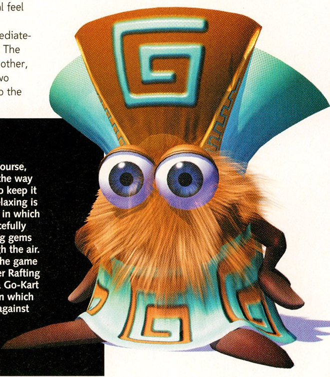
No one was more aware of this than the developers themselves, and they set out to remedy these and other problems in Croc 2. Nic Cusworth, lead designer of Croc 2, explains: "The first thing you're going to notice [in Croc 2] is that the levels are a lot bigger. We're talking five or six minutes of gameplay with no load times." It's impossible to convey through these screenshots the accuracy of that statement, but believe us, he's not kidding. Compared with the original game, the levels in Croc 2 are simply immense. Like many other developers, Argonaut opted to stream the level from the disc, loading new textures and enemies as Croc progresses. The results are levels that make the original feel like a completely different game.

Cusworth continues: "You'll also notice immediately that Croc is a lot faster and a lot more fluid. The analog control makes the movement a lot smoother, as well. (We got the analog controller about two weeks before we finished the original game, so the analog was sort of thrown in there at the last minute.)" Not only does Croc move more quickly, he's got more moves at his disposal as well. In addition to the now-familiar arsenal of tail-whips and butt-bounces, he now performs high jumps and long jumps (complete with midair somersault). Furthermore, he now has a few new ways to interact with his environment: Croc can swing on ropes, ride mine cars, maneuver giant snowballs (see below), and so on.



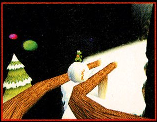
The Gobbos are also a great deal more interesting this time around. Instead of simply collecting the little guys like power-ups, Croc can now talk to them and enlist their aid in solving the game's many puzzles. There are even different "tribes" of Gobbos, from a strangely advanced Incan society to a swashbuckling pirate band. Each tribe has a different look to correspond to their unique environment.

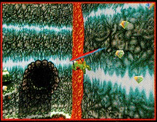
You can expect to become very familiar with these fuzzy little guys this spring as you help save them once again from the resurrected Baron Dante and his evil minions.



Minigame mania

Perhaps taking a cue from the excellent Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Croc 2 throws in a few level types that are completely different from the standard gameplay. These include the Snowball Roll (below left), in which Croc must roll an ever-shrinking snowball through a railed course, picking up little piles of snow along the way to increase the size of the snowball to keep it from falling through. Slightly more relaxing is the Hang-Gliding level (below right), in which Croc glides peacefully around collecting gems scattered through the air. Also slated for the game are a Whitewater Rafting level and even a Go-Kart Racing section in which Croc competes against other characters in the game!





Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	65%	**Availability**	May
Publisher	Psygnosis	**Developer**	Psygnosis

G–Police Weapons of Justice

Psygnosis offers up big improvements to an already successful title

They're back...the gorgeous prerendered intro shines again.

G-Police Weapons of Justice is Psygnosis' follow-up to the successful G-Police. Offering breathtaking prerendered intros, gorgeous cityscapes and unforgiving mission-based gameplay, the first game pushed the envelope in terms of graphics and atmosphere. The sequel promises similar atmosphere, but with a host of improvements and new additions.

Arguably the graphics and the control were the most important elements that needed to be improved in the original. Although it was a beautiful game, the range of visibility in G-Police was frustratingly limited. Weapons of Justice improves on the draw-in problem without resorting to massive amounts of pop-up. Instead, the buildings and architecture on the horizon are first traced in a green wire model.

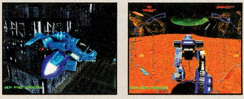
Navigating is made easier by the improved control. The original, released before the Dual Shock controller, offered limited analog configurations for the short-lived Dual Analog Pad. Thankfully, Weapons of Justice takes the ubiquitous Dual Shock more seriously: All the vehicles can be configured to utilize both sticks, one for thrust and one for movement. All controls are also fully customizable.

The objectives of the missions, always an important part of G-Police, now allow you to change attack vehicles. For example, although a mission may start by using the Venom, a fast attacking plane, one sequence may place you in the driver's seat of the Rhino, a police car. Also prominent in each vehicle is the radar display—an absolute necessity in Weapons of Justice. Since the mission objectives change frequently thanks to a very good story line, the waypoints to success come quickly. Accessing the map constantly would break up the action, so the player follows an indicator that points out the direction and distance of the next encounter.

TURRET
TURRET

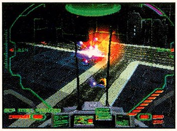
Back
Next Weapon
Start Mission

Encounters are fast and furious and the city is more alive and detailed than ever. The residents go about their daily business, clogging the streets, while the police work to limit civilian casualties. The increased graphic detail helps bring the gameplay closer to the look of the beautiful rendered cinemas that are a Psygnosis trademark. At this point, G-Police: Weapons of Justice looks like it may improve on the original in every way.



Vehicle Variety

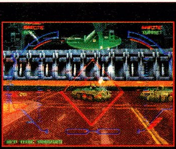
Multiple vehicles are now integrated into the variety of missions. The traditional Havoc aircraft remains, but players will also pilot the Raptor, a two-legged attack mech.

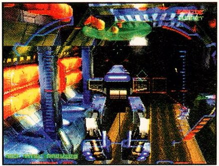


Wire-frame models will make it easier for you to hunt down and destroy the crime syndicate.

Listen Carefully for Clues

G-Police Weapons of Justice still features the immersive sound effects of the original: Frequent audio interruptions not only keep you updated on the conflict, but also provide clues for success. But this time around, the audio element is expressed even more heavily. In one mission, you intercept the communication frequency of the crime syndicate. As you defend two airbases, you hear their commander give orders. At one point, he orders one unit to distract your Raptor unit. If you chase that unit, the others quickly swoop in and destroy the airbases. It's a welcome innovation that's vital to the gameplay.





The Raptor is slow, but has the ability to jump extraordinarily high.

Theme Action
# of Players 1-8 (see below)
% Complete 100%
Availability Now
Publisher Namco
Developer Hudson

Point Blank 2

Just when you thought it was time to retire your GunCon...

Breaking it Down

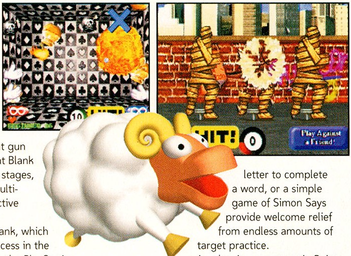
Point Blank 2 has 78 new stages arranged for your shooting pleasure. Here's the breakdown:

- **7** Red & Blue Target stages
- **7** Black & White Target stages

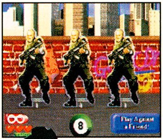
- **8** Grouping stages (shoot targets of a certain type)
- **9** Rapid Fire stages
- **5** Defense stages (protect Dr. Don and Dr. Dan!)
- **6** Gangster Hunt-style stages
- **5** Single Shot stages
- **8** Animal Target stages
- **8** Brain Teasers

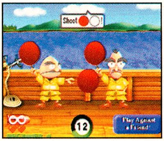
- **6** Variety stages (including Galaga!)
- **9** Miscellaneous stages

Despite its excellent design and implementation, Namco's GunCon device has only picked up two notable games (for a whopping total of three) since its debut in 1997. One of them was Point Blank, a frenetic gallery shooter that brought back the glory days of 2D light gun mayhem. With its sequel, Point Blank 2, Namco has crafted 78 new stages, and refined its plenitude of multiplayer modes to put your reactive skills to the test.



Unlike the original Point Blank, which initially enjoyed moderate success in the arcade before being ported to the PlayStation, this sequel was designed specifically for the home market. Through the alter egos of returning adventurers Dr. Don and Dr. Dan, players can take on the challenge in Arcade, Endurance or Versus play. Overall, the stages themselves have evolved to accommodate more depth of play.

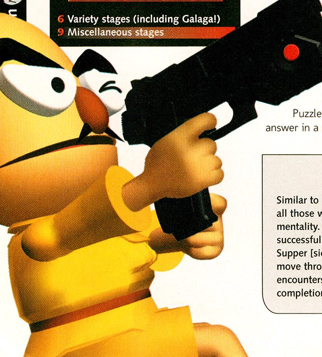




Aside from the usual suspects of pop-up police targets or rapid-fire twitchers, Point Blank 2 also contains stages that require a little headspark before pulling the trigger. Puzzle stages such as shooting the correct answer in a math problem, blasting the correct letter to complete a word, or a simple game of Simon Says provide welcome relief from endless amounts of target practice.

Another improvement in Point Blank 2 is the increased emphasis on multiplayer action. The game's Party Mode allows tournament play or a team battle royal for up to eight players (two at a time). Also included in Party Mode is Turf War, a minigame where up to four rivals attempt to capture as many squares as possible within a specified number of rounds. When players overtake an opponent's square, a showdown ensues and players duke it out in random stage competitions. Graphics and sound remain steadfastly loyal to the original Point Blank aesthetic—there's pixelation all over the place and the designs are endearingly primitive. To round off the package, Namco has obligingly refined Point Blank 2's Quest Mode into something much less annoying.

It's time to scratch the itch on that trigger finger because Point Blank 2 will be shooting anything but blanks.



Point Blank Theme Park

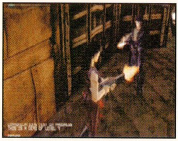
Similar to its forerunner, Point Blank 2 also sports a Quest Mode for all those who crave goals beyond the usual "beat the high score" mentality. In order to rescue the damsel in distress, players must successfully clear four areas distinguished by theme: Cosmic Drive, Supper [sic] Bullet Train, Haunted House and the Abyss Tours. Players move through each given area by shooting arrow icons and avoiding encounters as best they can. As always, skirmishes are resolved by the completion of a random stage.

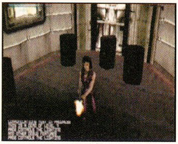
Theme	Action	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	60%	**Availability**	Q2 '99
Publisher	Fox Interactive	**Developer**	Argonaut

Alien Resurrection

It's Facehuggeriffic!

Rare is the science-fiction fan who doesn't rate at least one of the *Alien* movies (and most commonly, *Aliens*) among the top sci-fi films of our time. So it's not surprising that the series has spawned an entire stable of video game incarnations. The latest is Alien Resurrection, under lengthy development at Argonaut Software, the folks responsible for Croc: Legend of the Gobbos (as well as Croc II, previewed elsewhere in this issue). After a host of revisions, the game is finally nearly ready for a spring release, and it appears the multitude of game tweaks have been for the better.





The game will loosely parallel events in the film, with players taking on the roles of Ripley, Cal, Johner, DiStephano and Christie as they race through the decks of the spacecraft Auriga in an attempt to stop the maniacal Dr. Wren from infesting Earth with the deadly aliens. Interestingly, the game will include areas of the ship that appeared in the first drafts of the script and set design but were scrapped for the final production.

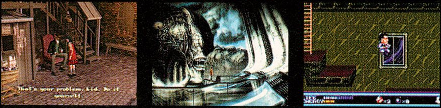
There won't, however, be a great deal of time to admire the scenery; Alien Resurrection is an action game through and through. The game includes nine different weapon types, which can be modified with upgrades collected within the levels. The arsenal includes such satisfyingly devastating weapons as a flamethrower and a freeze gun. But you won't want to neglect the less powerful weapons or you might find yourself quickly indisposed; nail an alien with too powerful an attack at too close a range and you might just get taken out yourself by the splatter of its acidic blood. Sounds like there will be at least some elements of strategy amidst all the action.

All the environments and characters are fully polygonal, which allows the game camera to make dramatic adjustments to tailor the view to the action on screen. While this sort of thing has proved less than perfect in other free-roaming shooters like One and Apocalypse, the focus in Alien Resurrection is cinematic rather than sensationalistic—that is to say, the camera movements are intended to create atmosphere rather than simply to show off all the pretty polys—which may prove an important distinction.

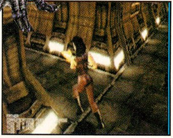
The polygonal models also allow the game to re-create classic film elements like the Facehugger impregnation and subsequent Chestburster alien birth. This is more than just a fancy death animation, however; if a Facehugger attaches itself to you, you'll have a limited amount of time in which to get to a medical station to have it removed or you'll end up an unwilling parent.

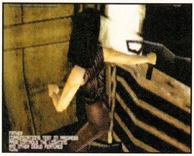
As of this writing, it was recently announced that early plans are already being laid for the next *Alien* film, which will apparently be co-written by Sigourney Weaver herself. With Alien Resurrection expected to release around the time of the 20th anniversary of the original film's release, it looks like this series has plenty of acidic blood still pulsing through it.

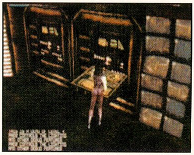
Family reunion



Some readers may be surprised to learn that in addition to the numerous Alien games available for just about every game system in history, some other games have been released that are also related to the films—perhaps not so closely, but no less important. First we have The City of Lost Children (above left), which was released for both the PlayStation and the PC. The game is based on the film of the same name, which was directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet, the director of Alien Resurrection. Next is Darkseed (above center), a PC game based on designs by H.R. Geiger, who designed the original Aliens as well as many of the movie sets. And finally we have Ghostbusters for the Sega Master System (above right). See, Sigourney Weaver was in Ghostbusters...







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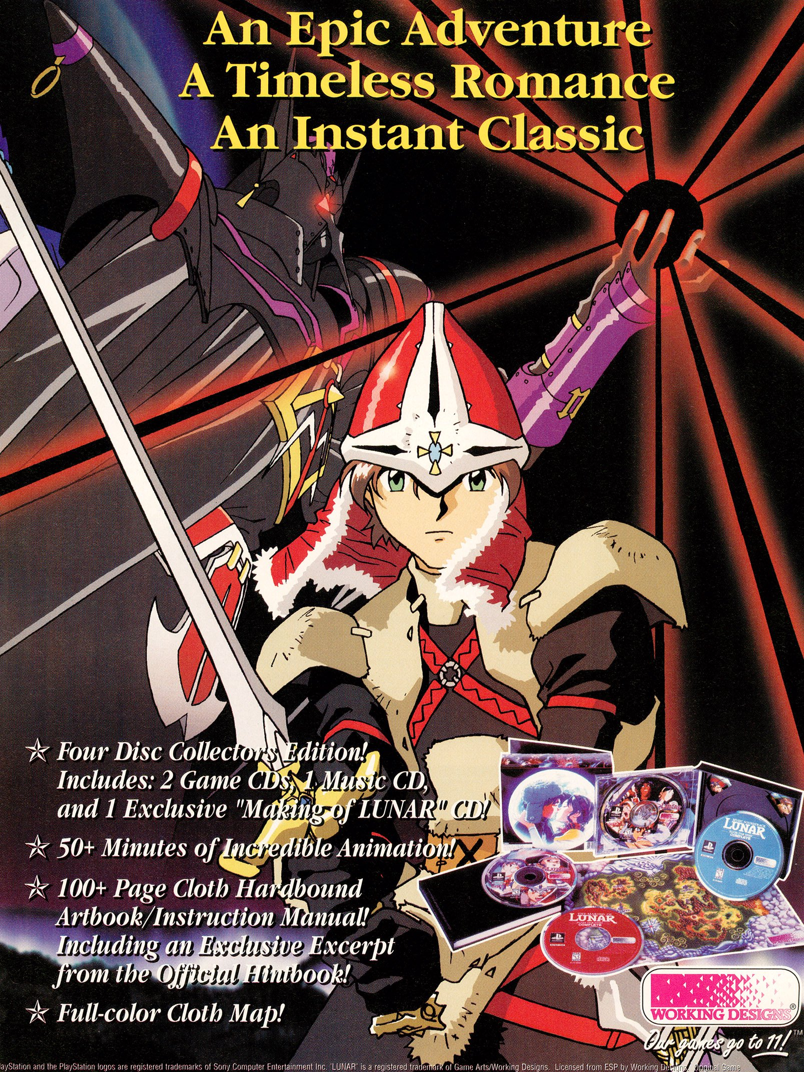

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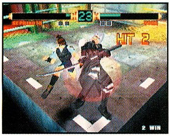
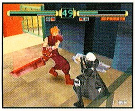
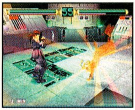
Theme	Fighting	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	May
Publisher	Square EA	**Developer**	DreamFactory

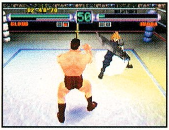
Ehrgeiz

Square's "Final Fantasy Fighter" hits the PlayStation loaded with extras









Big muscles are no match for Cloud's mighty sword.

Square's first title of 1999 will arrive in the form of Ehrgeiz, a 3D fighter from the folks who brought us Tobal No. 1. Nearly a year ago, the game's arcade debut (in cooperation with Namco) was greeted with a mixture of curiosity and indifference. Luckily, Ehrgeiz has been given the royal makeover as an arcade-to-home conversion.

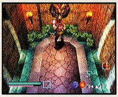
Events leading up to the international Ehrgeiz competition center on a mysterious sword excavated from the remains of an ancient German castle. The Materia engraved in this sword is so sought after that not even our friends from Final Fantasy VII could resist joining the fray. Often dubbed the "Final Fantasy Fighter," Ehrgeiz makes good use of Square's popular franchise by bringing back familiar faces like Cloud, Tifa, Yuffie, Vincent and the self-destructive Sephiroth. Final Fantasy characters aside, Ehrgeiz includes other interesting contestants who range from kickboxers and martial artists to wrestlers and ninjas.

As the brainchild of DreamFactory and Square, Ehrgeiz has inherited Tobal's basic look and feel. However, gameplay places more emphasis on the use of special attacks and the need to strategically exploit each multitiered 3D stage. Players can also pick up items to assist them against their opponents by smashing wooden crates strewn about the arena.

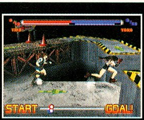
Ehrgeiz sports the same visual bombast emblematic of previous DreamFactory titles. Ehrgeiz pushes the PlayStation hardware with high-resolution 3D graphics that scream at a silky smooth 60 frames per second. Equally stunning is the choreography of the moves, exquisitely motion-captured for maximum realism. If it's eye-candy you're looking for, Ehrgeiz is a veritable sweets factory of quality and style.

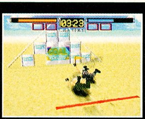
Among the added characters and minigames strewn throughout Ehrgeiz, the PlayStation version will also contain a full-featured action/RPG (see sidebar above). Square is looking to release this game sometime in May.

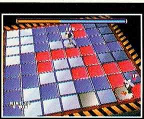
Take Control of Koji Matsuda and Head for the Forsaken Dungeon



Unlike the haphazard Quest Mode in Tobal No. 1, where control issues were a constant reminder of its shortcomings, Ehrgeiz opts for gameplay that stands independent from the fighting engine. The dungeon is packed with lots of ambiance, not to mention swarms of miscreants in every room. Aside from leveling up your character stats, you can pick up weapons, shields, magic items and food to aid you in your quest for immortality.







Let the Minigames Begin

Take a break from pummeling your friends and check out the four minigames accessible from the main menu.

INFINITY BATTLE: This minigame is a glorified "survival mode" in which players must defeat an endless wave of enemies in the shortest amount of time to replenish health and rack up points.

BATTLE RUNNER: In this wacky minigame, players race around a small circuit while beating each other to a pulp. Roller Derby, anyone?

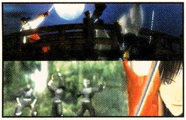
BATTLE BEACH: Sprint, dive and jump your way to victory in this track-and-field-type clone. Better bust out the ol' velcro wallet.

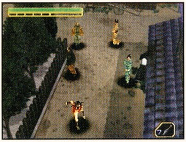
BATTLE PANEL: The most worthwhile of the minigames has the cast of Ehrgeiz playing through a variation of the game Othello. Addictive and fun.

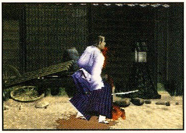
Theme	Adventure	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	80%	**Availability**	June
Publisher	Konami	**Developer**	KCES

Soul of the Samurai

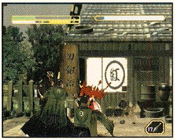
A chance to star in your very own samurai action movie

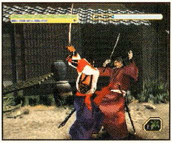






They didn't skimp on the blood and gore in SotS, that's for sure. Someone get this guy some Kaopectate.





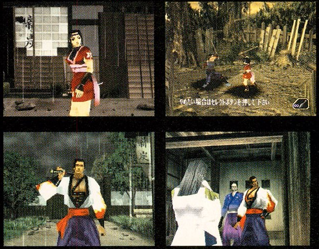
Konami has been on a roll lately, first with Metal Gear Solid and then the excellent Silent Hill; now they're hoping to continue that hot streak with the action/adventure game you see before you—Soul of the Samurai. Don't be surprised if the screenshots look familiar but you don't recognize the name—previously known as Japan, then Shogun Assassins, and then Samurai Legend, this game has been through more name changes than the artist formerly known as Prince. Hopefully that's the only thing the two will have in common.

Set in medieval Japan, Soul of the Samurai lets you choose from two different characters right at the start of the game: the hard-bitten wandering samurai Kotaro, or the stealthy female ninja Rin. Which of these two warriors you choose changes not only the game's storyline (although both overlap to some degree) but control and gameplay as well. Kotaro's sturdy samurai blade is more powerful and has great range, but Rin's short sword allows for quicker movements and damaging combo attacks. The motives driving the two characters also differ, but their main objective is the same—get to the bottom of what (or who) is corrupting people and causing the deaths of villagers in their hometown.

Although Soul of the Samurai has its fair share of action elements—like special moves you learn as the game progresses, as well as jumping, blocking and combo attacks—these are all worked into the larger frame of an adventure game. Sure there's plenty of hack-'n'-slash fighting, but players also need to talk to villagers to discover clues, gather items to open new areas, even use a map to find their way through the game. It actually plays somewhat like Resident Evil without guns, a comparison that makes even more sense when you notice both games also use polygonal characters on rendered backdrops.

It's still too early to tell if Konami's latest title will be up to the high standards set by their recent hits, but we like what we've seen so far. The graphics are looking great and the overall theme of fighting samurai and ninja in ancient Japan seems to lend itself perfectly to this type of game. If Soul of the Samurai can successfully add some great storytelling with fluid, fighting game-style controls (an aspect that still needs work at this point), Konami might be able to make it three great games in a row.

Choose your own adventure



Soul of the Samurai lets you choose between two main characters for your game. The nimble ninja Rin (top left) is on a search for her older brother, who taught her the skills of a warrior when they were young (as told through the flashback pictured above). The wandering samurai Kotaro has returned to visit an old friend, but quickly discovers something is amiss in his old hometown.

Theme Sports
# of Players 1-2
% Complete 80%
Availability April
Publisher Electronic Arts
Developer EA Sports

Triple Play 2000

EA's baseball game tries to capture the renewed excitement of the nation's pastime

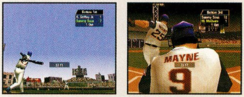
After years of delivering a great baseball simulation that played slower than the game of baseball itself, it appears that EA finally wised up and addressed Triple Play's nagging gameplay problems.

Last year was a grand, record-breaking one for baseball, and the pressure is on for baseball video games to re-create that excitement on the television screen. With this in mind, EA shifted the main focus of Triple Play 2000 to making the game fun, while still being a credible simulation. The result is a more offensive-minded game that delivers smooth gameplay and easier hitting. Now, before you baseball purists balk at hitting getting easier, you should consider that the quality of pitching in the league is subpar at best, making it perfectly logical to make the game more offensive.

Regardless of whether you want hitting to be easier or not, the improved frame-rate is something that everyone should appreciate. Triple Play 2000 moves much more smoothly and fluidly than its predecessors—it's almost like an entirely different game. If the graphics were sacrificed to achieve this, it's not apparent in the playable version we sampled. The players look impressive, with a variety of great animations, particularly some really cool (and violent) collisions at the plate. Furthermore, their faces look real, almost frighteningly so, thanks to their facial expressions that change relative to what happens on the field. One unexpected addition to the graphics are light trails that are visible when a ball is hit or thrown hard. Much like the Fox glowing hockey puck, the baseball has a glow to it. While the effect is nice to look at, baseball purists may find it annoying. In this version, there's no way to turn it off. Hopefully, EA has the foresight to make this a selectable option.

And why not? The game is loaded with features and options such as more hitting control, selectable batter stances, fielding aids and a new rookie mode. This, of course, is in addition to the unmatched play modes, excellent two-man commentary, loads of stats, and in-depth features that have always made the Triple Play franchise appeal to hardcore fans.

We're guessing they'll like this game too, even if Triple Play 2000 is faster-paced and more glitzy than the games at the ballpark.

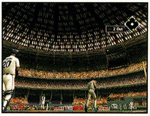


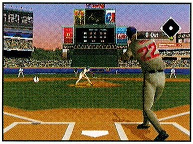
A Home Run Derby for the Ages

In this year's Triple Play, EA decided to something a little different by going back to the rules used in the Home Run Derbys of the '40s. Instead of having lots of players swinging for the fences, this version focuses on one-on-one competition with three outs and a set number of innings.

Do You Care?

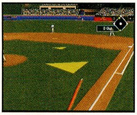
This is the first title of EA's sports lineup to not use an abbreviation of the year. We're guessing that Triple Play '00 just wouldn't have been as compelling.



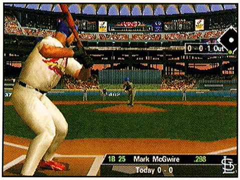


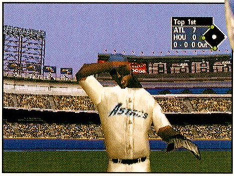
75

The number of camera angles EA claims are used during gameplay. We're inclined to believe them since we've seen around 10 of them used to show home runs.



Optional fielding aids help beginners track down those hard-hit balls.



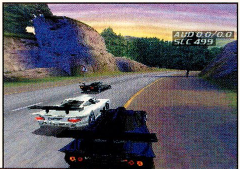


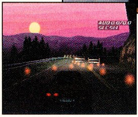
Whew, sure is hard making seven million a year standing around in the outfield between pitches.

Theme	Racing	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	90%	**Availability**	March
Publisher	Electronic Arts	**Developer**	EA Canada

Need For Speed: High Stakes

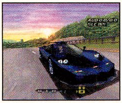
EA raises the price for victory in the deepest NFS game yet





Electronic Arts has learned a few lessons from Sony's ubiquitous Gran Turismo and is applying them to Need For Speed: High Stakes, the fourth game of the series that's set to release in March. While Need For Speed III emphasized arcade racing at the expense of accurate physics or car ownership, NFS: High Stakes will up the ante by combining accessibility and realism to create one of the most white-knuckled rides ever.

NFS: High Stakes continues its tradition of car worship by boasting an impressive array of European and U.S. machinery. Each of the 15 (or more) cars is given an exquisite amount of detail—from visual and audio representation to more tactile features like handling, drifting and upgrading. On the single-player side, there is the instantly gratifying Test Drive Mode, which allows you to take unlocked cars for a spin on a total of eight different tracks. In Tournament Mode, players take on the role of ownership and progress through a series of tournaments, which get progressively more difficult as the cars become more exotic and more expensive. Winning tournaments and special events will earn you cold cash toward the purchase of that elusive Ferrari 550 Maranello or McClaren's fierce F1 GTR.



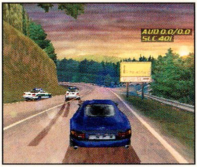
Over time, collectors may amass a fleet of exotic autos to be used in two-player "High Stakes" games. In a High Stakes game, two players compete by housing their machines on individual memory cards and race each other for "pink slips," whereby the loser forfeits his car to the winner's memory card. Another important aspect of a High Stakes game is the accountability of car damage. Nothing hits the pocketbook harder than a totaled Lamborghini Diablo SV. To top off the evolution, last year's Hot Pursuit Mode has been considerably modified to emphasize two-player cops-and-robbers duels.

The only discernible blemish on what is otherwise a game of enormous potential, is the slowdown that occurs when more than a couple cars are present on the screen. If Electronic Arts can stabilize the frame-rate by the time of its release, Need For Speed: High Stakes will undoubtedly stand among the year's best.

High Rollers

In a two-player High Stakes game, contestants will have the option to battle it out in a winner-takes-all scenario. When players enter Pink Slip Mode, they are forewarned that cars may permanently be removed from the memory card—depending on the outcome of the race. Also incorporated in High Stakes is the fact that car damage must now be repaired for optimum performance. The consequences of losing control have never been more costly.

AUD 0.0/0.0
SLC 142



AUD 0.0/0.0
SLC 570

Plow through hordes of angry cops in the Hot Persuit Mode (left).

BRIDGESTONE
POTENZA
AMG

The Hot Pursuit of Happiness

Similar to the Hot Pursuit modes featured in previous incarnations, NFS: High Stakes continues to prey on our cultural fascination with fleeing from The Man. Subtle changes to the core gameplay have made Hot Pursuit more enjoyable. Fugitives can now slam on their brakes and watch law enforcement fishtail and circle back. It's not over until it's literally over. In two-player duel mode, cops have spike belts, roadblocks and back-ups at their disposal while the "suspect" must weave in and out of his traps.

Theme Fighting	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 70%	**Availability** June
Publisher AGETEC	**Developer** Ascii

Fighter Maker

Create the fighter you've always dreamed of

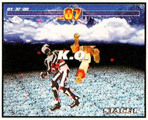
How many times have you played a fighting game and said, "That move was weak! I could have done something better than that." Well, now you've got your chance. Fighter Maker includes a full fighting game with a complete roster of 20 unique characters available right from the start, but the fun begins when you start creating your own player. Everything from the character's walking and blocking animations can be altered, giving you complete control over their personality. When we say complete control, we mean control down to individual limbs! You can even move the human body in ways that are physically impossible in real life. Would you like your player's winning animation to involve complex yoga maneuvers? Done! Do you want a character who has the Macarena as a special move? Done! The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

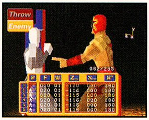
If you are not quite daring enough to start from scratch, Fighter Maker has 600 preset moves—encompassing 20 different fighting styles from wrestling to kung fu—that you can either mix and match to build your character's repertoire (an impressive arsenal of 69 different moves) or alter to your liking. Say there's an uppercut move that you feel should cause the enemy to float six feet in the air instead of falling to the left. Simply edit that move and it's done. You can also change the sound effect accompanying the move; for instance, you can add the sound of breaking bones to a grab move or add a slapping sound to an attack on your opponent's head.

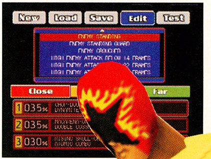
Now, the whole process of creating moves and characters may seem extremely daunting, but due to the intuitive interface, it sounds a lot more complicated than it really is. And if you do run into trouble, you can get help from the massive 72-page manual that will be included with the game.

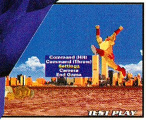
If building a better fighter sounds like a dream come true, you might want to set aside a little extra for a new memory card or ten; each character you create requires a full 15 blocks of memory card space!

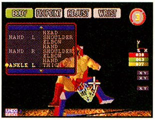
Although there has been no official announcement regarding the U.S. release of this game's sister title, RPG Maker, we expect that if response to Fighter Maker is favorable enough, RPG fans may just get a chance to build their own adventures sometime soon.

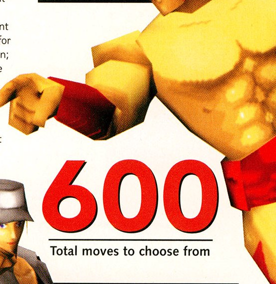

07
K.O.
STAGE 1


Throw
Enemy

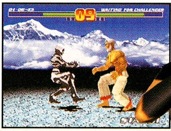

New
Load
Save
Edit
Test
ENEMY STANDING
ENEMY STANDING GUARD
ENEMY CROUCHED
Close
Far
1 035%
2 035%
3 030%

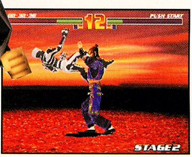

Command (Hit)
Command (Throw)
Settings
Camera
End Game
TEST PLAY


BODY
AX POINT
ADJUST
WRIST
HAND L
HAND R
ANKLE L
HEAD
SHOULDER
ELBOW
HAND
THIGH

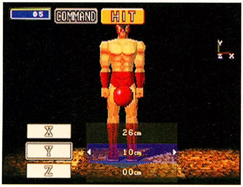


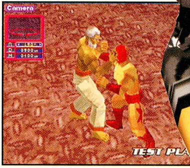
600
Total moves to choose from


09
WAITING FOR CHALLENGER


12
PUSH START
STAGE2

The developers included a special treat for fans of Street Fighter EX: Skull-o-mania (above) makes a cameo appearance in Fighter Maker.


05
COMMAND
HIT
X
Y
Z
26cm
10cm
00cm

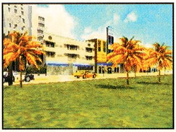

Camera
TEST PLA

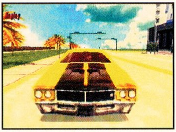
Driver

Rip through four U.S. cities on a mission to infiltrate and take down a crime ring in a new racing/action game from Reflections, the developer of Destruction Derby 1 and 2. In Driver, you take the role of an undercover cop who poses as a driver for hire, carrying out approximately 25 missions in New York, Los Angeles, Miami and San Francisco.

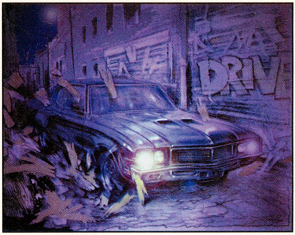
The game is set in the '70s, and boasts accurate maps that include each city's landmarks and back alleys. The 3D maps are littered with details like working traffic lights, pedestrians who jump out of the way of oncoming cars, and other motorists and patrolling cops.

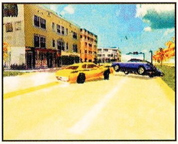
Driver also features realistic damage modeling and physics on all cars, so you'll actually see your fenders bend and your hubcaps fly off as you tear through tight turns. Throw in a pinch of corruption and a dash of double-cross, and you've got what may be a tasty recipe to satisfy fans of car-based action games.

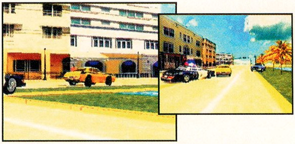


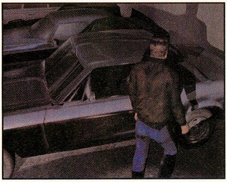


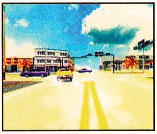
The funky '70s style and cinematic camera angles are meant to evoke the feeling of classic Hollywood car chases.

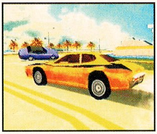


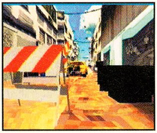


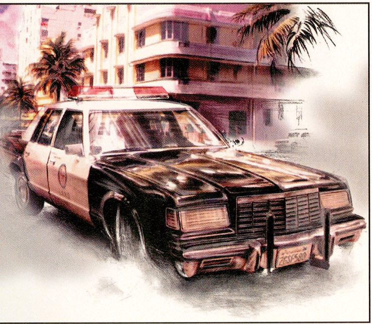


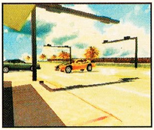


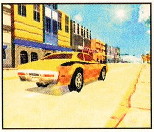




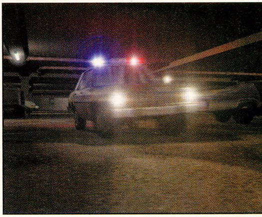




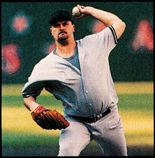
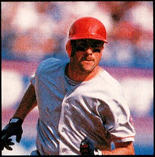
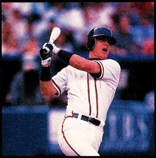




Driver's plot line will twist and turn as many times as that snazzy yellow gas guzzler will when trying to evade the cops.

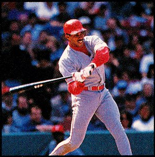


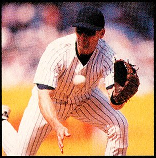
Theme Action	**# of Players** TBA	**% Complete** 60%
Availability July	**Publisher** GT Interactive	**Developer** Reflections

"If you love baseball... this is the only game in town."

- GamerzEdge





HIGH HEAT Baseball™ 2000

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"Top-notch arcade play; the best baseball game AI" *- PC Gamer*

- **TruPlay™ AI** guarantees true-to-life base running, fielding, and managing
- Motion-captured **polygonal players** in a 3D environment ensures authentic major-league gameplay
- **Broadcast-style** camera angles and VCR features allow you to replay the action from any angle*

"...all the intricacies of a real game, from line drives to the suicide squeeze and the double switch."

- Family PC

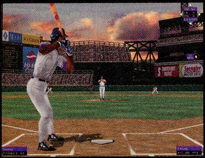
- **Blazing fast** gameplay and all the action of a highlight reel
- **Pro-style** interface that brings you into the game
- Head-to-Head **Multi-player** action via LAN, modem, or Internet*

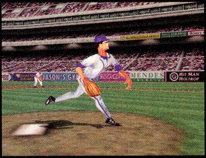
"This game feels like baseball...great gameplay, and super AI. No other game does these things."

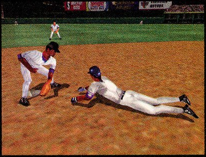
- PC Sports Games

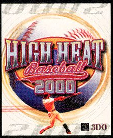
- **New 1999 MLBPA** player rosters and 1998 career stats
- **Career Mode** includes a realistic aging curve, player retirement, and new rookie prospects*
- Make block buster deals with **Multi-player trades** and **Manage-only mode** to control key aspects of gameplay*

*PC version only









"This is the best baseball game, satisfaction guaranteed." *

- Trip Hawkins, President, 3DO

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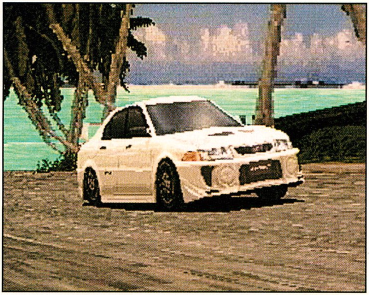
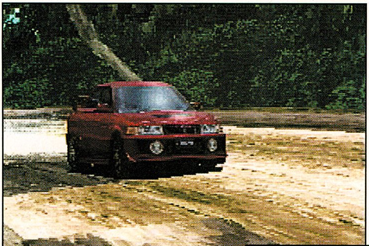


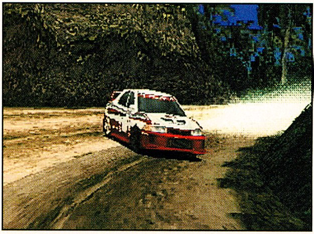
Gran Turismo 2

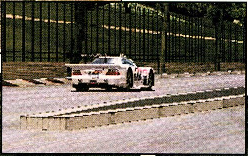
Theme Racing	**# of Players** 1-2	**% Complete** 40%
Availability Q2 '99	**Publisher** Sony CEA	**Developer** Polyphony Digital

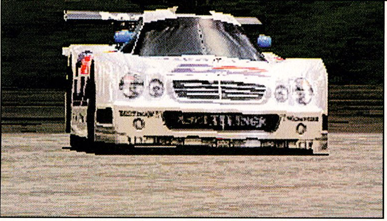
At long last, the follow-up to the PlayStation's most brilliant racing game has been officially announced for release this summer. The sequel promises some impressive enhancements over the original. The game will play host to more than 400 different vehicles (the original had 150), all of which should look even more impressive with the game's improved car models. There will be lots of new modifications to enhance your car's performance, and more than 20 tracks to test them out on. With the game's updated physics engine, you'll notice every little tweak.

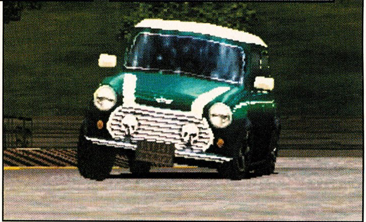
Suffice to say, Gran Turismo 2 promises to push the PlayStation to the limits, and will probably raise the bar for racing games—just as the original did a year ago. Keep an eye on *OPM* for the latest information on what promises to be the racing game to beat in 1999.











DODGE
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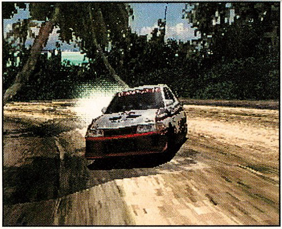
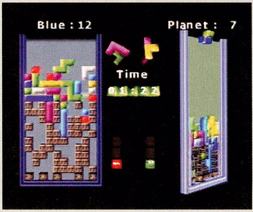
TOTAL
Mobil

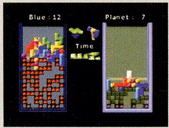


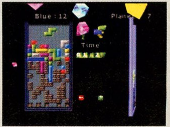
The Next Tetris

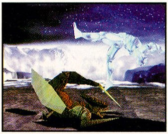
Blue Planet's forthcoming take on Tetris stays true to the classic while adding a few new elements to keep it fresh. Along with the original game, there is a multiplayer option that offers an interesting way to attack your opponent: When you clear three or more lines, your foe's Tetris board spins and wobbles, potentially throwing him off course. And while the game only uses the standard four Tetris shapes, some blocks can break away to fill empty spaces and other blocks can bond with like colors to help clear big chunks.

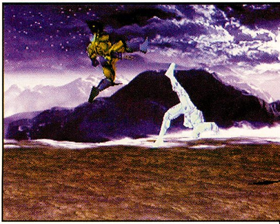
Theme Puzzle	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 70%	**Availability** June
Publisher Hasbro Int.	**Developer** Blue Planet Soft.

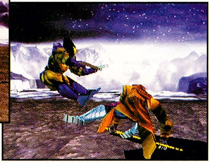

Blue : 12
Planet : 7
Time
01:22


Blue : 12
Planet : 7
Time


Blue : 12
Time







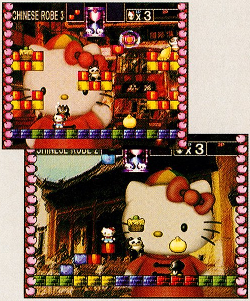
X-Men

As promised, here's the latest update on Activision's forthcoming 3D fighting game. Due out this summer, X-Men is still fairly early in development, making the details sketchy. We do know that the game will have special Tournament Modes, fight summaries and a unique ranking system. Characters will show visible damage when hurt, and can also perform finishing modes (a la Mortal Kombat 4). Look for a full preview in a future issue.

Theme Fighting	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 40%	**Availability** Q3 '99
Publisher Activision	**Developer** Syrox

Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy

What's sure to be the cutest game of the year, even edging out the upcoming Elmo titles, is also shaping up to be a fairly solid puzzler. The game plays like a cross between Lode Runner and Tetris, with falling blocks that help create paths and remove obstacles so Kitty can grab all the goodies and avoid her too-cute enemies.



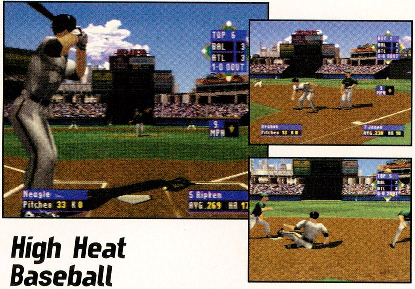
Theme Puzzle	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 95%	**Availability** March
Publisher NewKidCo	**Developer** Culture Pub.

SETSUNA
DANZAIVER

Evil Zone

This is Titus' first attempt at a PlayStation game, and they're really picking a tough genre to debut in. Evil Zone is a fighting game that includes a Story Mode and a Survival Mode, in addition to the requisite fare. There are 10 different fighters, 11 different backgrounds and lots of weapons. Right now Titus is scoping out alternative bands to provide the soundtrack.

Theme Fighting	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 60%	**Availability** May
Publisher Titus	**Developer** Yukes


TOP 6
BAL 3
ATL 3
1-0 0OUT
Neagle
Pitches 33 K 0
S Ripken
AVG .269 HR 17

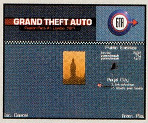
High Heat Baseball

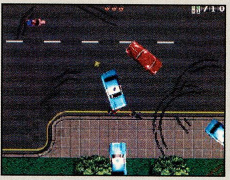
One of the first games that Trip Hawkins, CEO of The 3DO Company, worked on was the critically acclaimed Earl Weaver Baseball. It will be interesting to see if that experience will pay off on his company's High Heat Baseball. The game is being developed by a team that only does baseball games, and they're promising a game that looks and feels real. Don't they all?

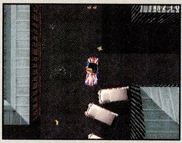
Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 40%	**Availability** Q2 '99
Publisher 3DO	**Developer** Team .366

Grand Theft Auto: London

This is the first PlayStation mission disc to be released in the U.S., and it couldn't have happened to a more controversial game. Basically, you can look forward to more of the same. It's set in London in 1969.

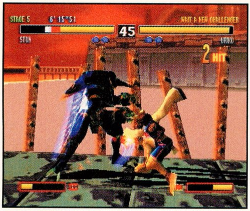

GRAND THEFT AUTO

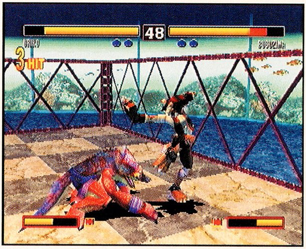


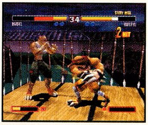


Theme Action	**# of Players** 1
% Complete 50%	**Availability** Q2 '99
Publisher Rockstar	**Developer** Rockstar

Theme Fighting	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 80%	**Availability** May
Publisher Sony CEA	**Developer** Hudson Soft


STAGE 5
45
2 HIT

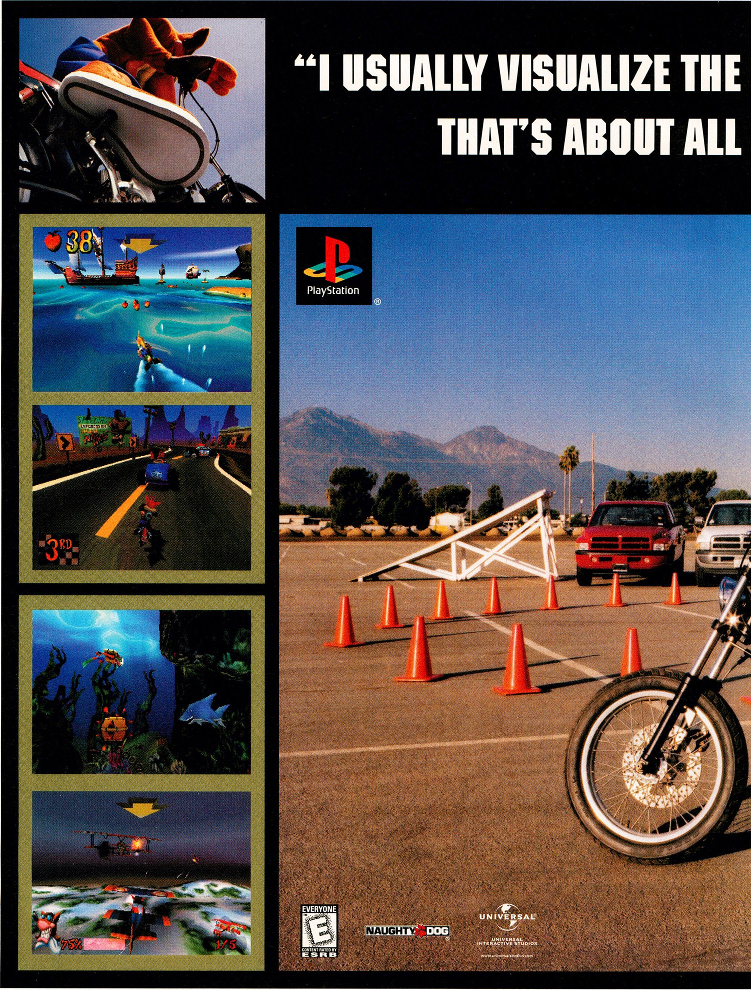

48
URIKO
BUSUZIMA
3 HIT



Bloody Roar 2

STAGE 4
40
BUSUZIMA

There's nothing sexier than humans that turn into beasts in the middle of a fight, and Bloody Roar 2 promises to bring plenty of that action to the PlayStation. The sequel will return four characters from the original while adding seven new ones, two of which are hidden. New features include Analog Dual Shock support, a Story Mode, custom combo moves, higher resolution graphics and a vastly improved frame-rate that screams at 60 frames-per-second.


“I USUALLY VISUALIZE THE
THAT’S ABOUT ALL
38
3RD
75%
1/5
PlayStation
EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
NAUGHTY DOG
UNIVERSAL
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JUMP BEFORE I TAKE OFF.
THE HELP I NEED.”

After some hard-core training, he's ready to warp through time and take on all-new worlds. Ride down Route 66 on a bike. Dogfight in a biplane. Swim through Atlantis. Or run through the Jurassic era. You up for it? Crash is. He's got an all-new, supercharged body-slam, a double jump, a death tornado spin and a bazooka. You can even play as Crash's kid sister, Coco. CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED™ is here. And it's his most insane adventure ever.

CRASH BANDICOOT WARPED

OH YEAH...HE'S READY.

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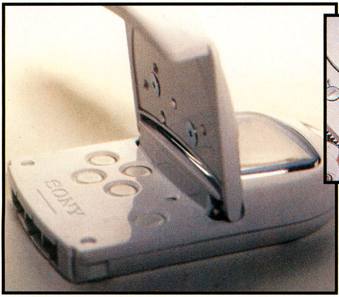
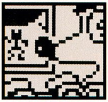
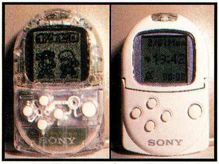




PocketStation

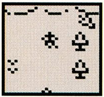
Sony

Sony's new PocketStation memory-card-and-portable-minigame-machine-in-one was finally released in Japan on January 23, and promptly sold out all over the country later the same day. Sony had already delayed for a month the launch of the bite-sized system anticipating high demand, but apparently was still unable to match the public's appetite for the exciting new peripheral.



Even now, almost a month after its release, PocketStations are still hard to come by in Japan; luckily we here at *OPM* were able to snag two (we simply *had* to have one in each color to match our outfits!). Here's our hands-on report.

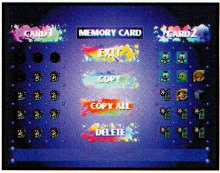
Even though we've all seen pictures of the PocketStation for months now, it's not until you hold one in your hands that you realize how really tiny and compact it is—barely bigger than a standard memory card, and almost the same weight. The black-and-white display may have a low resolution (32 dots by 32 dots), but the screen is still impressively crisp and clear. The PocketStation's audio, relayed through a speaker on its back, is also nothing fancy, but is good enough to play simple music and even convey voice samples (like the announcer saying "Fight!" in Street Fighter Alpha 3's minigame, for example).



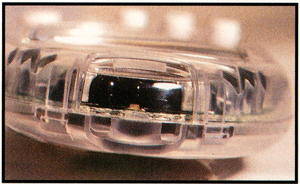
There is no on/off switch for the PocketStation, but you can activate it anytime by pushing the action button or plugging it into a powered PlayStation; to turn it off, just let it sit for 60 seconds and it will power itself down. Out of the box, the first thing you need to do is set the time and date. Then you can set an alarm, and choose between two volume levels or turn the sound off. In fact, about the only things separating the default display on the PocketStation from most digital watch faces is the picture of a heart beating along to the time and a small number in the lower left corner showing how many memory card blocks (out of 15) are currently full.

Pushing the left or right D-buttons will cycle through whatever minigames or memory card saves you have stored on the PocketStation; once you find one you like, press the action button to start, and when you are done press it again and hold to exit back to the main display. Minigames saved on the PocketStation function just like normal game saves as far as the PlayStation is concerned; they take up a certain number of blocks (anywhere from 2 to 12 in the games available so far, depending on their complexity), have an icon that appears on the memory manager screen, and can be transferred to a standard memory card just like any other game save. By the same token, normal memory card saves show up on the PocketStation using the same icon that appears on the PlayStation's memory management screen (except of course, they are in black and white).

When it is plugged into the PlayStation, the PocketStation turns itself on if it isn't already, and flips its display over so it can be read easily. Whenever it is busy being read or downloading a minigame or save file, a bright red light in the IR com port glows, letting you know the PocketStation is busy and not to remove it.



With a super-compact and clever design, infrared communication port, memory card abilities and its own internal clock, the PocketStation opens up whole new avenues of special features and gameplay ideas for developers to tap. Check the next couple pages to see what they have come up with so far, and keep an eye on *OPM* for future developments and full coverage of the U.S. PocketStation launch, hopefully coming soon.

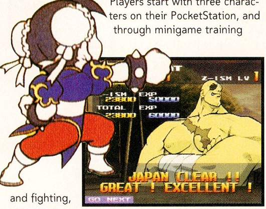


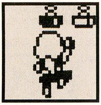
NOTE: Some of the following minigame names are translations or were made up when titles didn't exist. All titles are subject to change.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

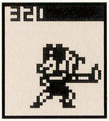
Capcom, Memory Size: 11 Blocks

One of the most complex and entertaining games for the PocketStation yet, Street Fighter Alpha 3's (or Street Fighter Zero 3 as it's known in Japan) minigame, named "Pocket Zero," is a perfect example of using the PlayStation and the PocketStation to complement each other. Players start with three characters on their PocketStation, and through minigame training and fighting, earn more fighters and experience points, which can then be applied back to the World Tour mode of the PlayStation game. A very cool idea that works great. Here's a look at a few of the different minigame modes:

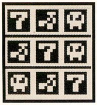




Practice: Earn experience by shooting fireballs at passing targets or by dragon punching pads that lower from the top of the screen. The better your timing, the more experience you can earn.



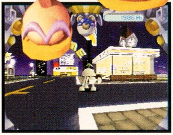
Fight: Pick three fighters and arrange them in the order you want to square off against the computer or against a friend's PocketStation. You can train your fighters all you want, but once battle begins they are on their own. The computer controls both sides as they fight back and forth until one team loses all three team members. Whether your fighters hit or miss all depends on how well they are trained, and of course a little bit of luck.



Slots: gamble experience points in this slot machine-style game where you try to line up three like symbols.

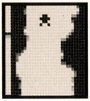
POCKET MUUMUU

SCEI, Memory Size: Variable

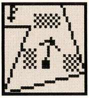


Based on characters from the Jumping Flash series of 3D platformers, Pocket MuuMuu is Sony's first game made expressly for the PocketStation, and the first in an line of "Pocket" titles (see sidebar). The idea here is to earn money by scoring high on PocketStation minigames, in order to buy more minigames and build an amusement park in the PlayStation section of the game. You can even try the minigames out on a PocketStation emulator on your PlayStation before you decide to download it. Pocket MuuMuu also reads the PocketStation's clock to determine what time it is, and uses that information to change things in the game. For example, in the background sky. day changes to dusk and then to night just as it is happening in the real world, and certain shops within the game are only open during certain hours (except for the 24-hour minigame convenience store!), but of course you can always fool the game by changing the time on your PocketStation. Here's a few examples of the dozens of minigames in Pocket MuuMuu:

ASTRO FIGHTER



Drop Zone: Guide a tiny falling man past curving cliff walls by pressing left or right. The more levels you can pass successfully the more points you can earn, but the further you go the tougher the cliffs become.

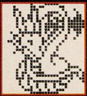


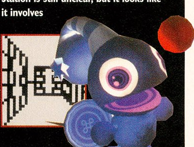
Putt-Putt Golf: Use the left and right buttons to line up your shot, then tap the action button to shoot. Score more points for each of the six holes you can finish under par.

Pocket Dungeon

Available: Spring, SCEI

A mini-RPG, Sony's next game in their "Pocket" line lets you move step by step through various dungeon mazes, fighting monsters and searching for treasure. Combat is much more simple than your average RPG, of course—just time your button press as a damage bar quickly rises and falls. Exactly how the game works back on the PlayStation is still unclear, but it looks like it involves some kind of monster capturing/raising elements, perhaps similar to Nintendo's popular Pokémon games. More on this one as it nears release this spring.

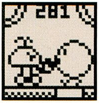




Release List

Here's a list of all the games currently available or announced in Japan that support the PocketStation.

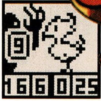
I.Q. Final	Now
Crash Bandicoot 3	Now
Theme Aquarium	Now
Be Pirates!	Now
Lunatic Dawn 3	Now
Hello Kitty: White Present	Now
Final Fantasy VIII	Now
Street Fighter Zero 3	Now
Monster Race	Now
Armored Core: Master of Arena	Now
Battle Bug Story	Now
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Now
Kyro-chan's Print Club	Now
Poporogue	Now
Pi to mail	Now
Pocket MuuMuu	Now
Monster Farm 2	Now
Fish Hunter	Now
World Neverland 2	Now
Gallop Racer 3	3/18
All Japan Pro Wrestling	3/??
Mister Prospector	3/??
Spyro the Dragon	4/??
Monster World	4/??
Shop Keeper	4/??
Burger Burger 2	Spring
World Stadium 3	Spring
Pocket Dungeon	Spring
Everywhere Together	Spring



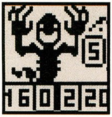
Sumo MuuMuu: Tap the action button as fast as you can to push your opponent out of the ring before time runs out. You can even choose your own character to play as (MuuMuu, dinosaur, dog, Elvis, etc.).

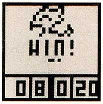
FINAL FANTASY VIII

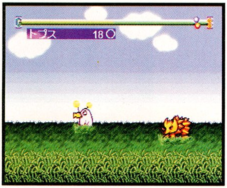
Square, Memory Size: 7 Blocks



Definitely one of the big "killer apps" many people will buy a PocketStation for is Square's new super-RPG, released just last month. For Final Fantasy VIII's PocketStation minigame, you control a "Cochocobo," a smaller version of a Chocobo, in his battles against various monsters, trying to win treasure and items along the way. We aren't quite sure yet how this helps you back in the PlayStation portion of the game, but check out our continuing coverage of Final Fantasy VIII next issue for more details.





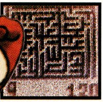


MONSTER RACE

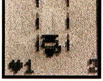
Koei, Memory Size: 7 Blocks

This cute little kid's game of catching and raising monsters (the big trend in Japanese games right now, if you hadn't noticed) actually has quite a few fun PocketStation games:

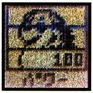
Maze Race: After only a few seconds of an overview of the entire maze, this game zooms up close to a small section of it and you must find your way out in a limited number of steps.



Dodge 'Em: Similar to the Crash running minigame, this one has you running upscreen trying to gather points in the form of dots and stars while at the same time jumping or dodging obstacles.

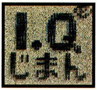


Horizontal Slots: Just like a slot machine, but sideways—match three parts of the same picture to win. Why, just what did you think we meant by horizontal slots?

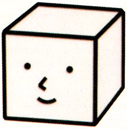


IQ FINAL

SCEI, Memory Size: 4 Blocks



No minigames in the PocketStation download of Sony's new puzzle game, but instead a simple way to trade and compare saved games. Each game save displays the name of its creator, the number of levels completed perfectly and the I.Q. as scored in the full game, so you can transfer your best scores to rank and friends to store them on their PocketStation.



SPYRO

SCEI, Memory Blocks: ??

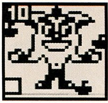
Although Sony's big platform game is still not out in Japan, PocketStation support has already been announced for Spyro. There haven't been any pictures released yet, though, so no one is quite sure how it will be used.

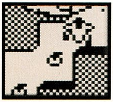
CRASH BANDICOOT 3

SCEI, Memory Size: 12 Blocks

Crash is just as big a name overseas as he is here, and Sony made sure to take advantage of that fact to help push the new PocketStation. The import Crash 3 is one of the best reasons yet to own a PocketStation, with four great minigames all staring everyone's favorite marsupial:

Dancin' Machine: Tap the action button in time to the music and small arrows wrapping around the screen to make Crash shake that thang just like he did in Crash 2 and 3.





Crash Dash: Help Crash gather fruit and avoid pits by jumping or dodging left and right as he runs down a quickly scrolling screen.

Tile Puzzle: The old move eight tiles around nine spaces to make a picture puzzle (this one of Crash screaming "Ma!" for some reason).

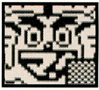
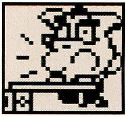


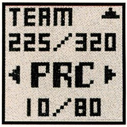
Photo Album: This is where particularly memorable moments from your PocketStation adventures with Crash are automatically stored. Minigame high scores or different scenes of Crash (watching TV, taking a bath, etc.) that periodically show up the more you play are all saved here.



R4

Namco, Memory Size: 2 Blocks

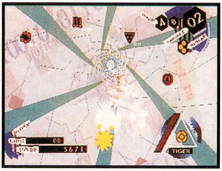
Not really a minigame, but a handy memory card feature, R4's PocketStation download lets you cycle through all the car teams and manufacturers you have earned and saved in the PlayStation game. Once you find the car you're looking for (out of a possible 321), you can select it and transfer it to another PocketStation via the wireless link port.

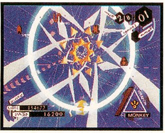


iS: Internal Section

Square

Imagine that the people behind the look and style of the WipeOut games were given the job of remaking Tempest and you might end up with something like Square's latest shooter, internal Section. Described as a "digital art shooter," iS is indeed beautiful in its own way. Great care has been taken in every detail of the design, from the in-game menus right down to the printing on the CD and packaging.





Gameplay, though, is rather simple—the player controls a ship that rides along the edge of a circular "web" of sorts, blasting enemies or dodging obstacles as they fly into the screen. Strategy enters the game through the ability (and often the necessity) to switch between 12 weapons, all available from the start of the game and named after the signs of the Chinese zodiac (like horse, tiger, dragon, etc.).

All the graphics in iS, including your ship, the enemies and the backgrounds, are simple geometric shapes—plain but colorful flat-shaded polygons that move in complex patterns and with dizzying speed. Along with a heavily techno soundtrack the effect is almost hypnotic; it can even be a distraction, as you feel your mind floating away with your eyes locked to the screen unblinking. Most games feature an epilepsy warning stating that some people may experience dizziness or discomfort—internal Section would probably blow their heads clean off their shoulders.

Luckily you can pop in your own music CD to play along with before that happens, but you should never feel too safe with a game that calls itself "the devil's kaleidoscope."

I.Q. Final

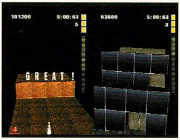
SCEI

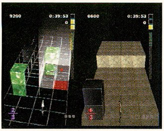
Following up on one of the more unusual puzzle games of recent memory is Intelligent Qube Final, a game that expands on the mind-boggling action of the original with new puzzles, new characters, some new moves and a welcome two-player split screen competitive mode.

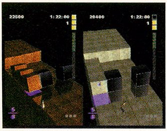
Although the basic puzzle structure is the same as in the original, there are a few subtle changes this time around. First, in certain modes the standard mark-and-trigger functions are augmented by a Reverse button, which lifts the entire puzzle board up and flips it over (see below). Certain puzzles can only be solved "under par" by employing this technique. (As if it weren't hard enough to plan out your moves from just one side, now you have to consider the puzzle from *both* sides.)

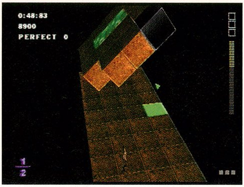
Also new to I.Q. Final are "obstacle course" puzzles (see above right), in which you must maneuver your character through a rolling maze of blocks.

With three separate gameplay modes, a split-screen two player survival game, and the ability to construct your own puzzles with which to confound your friends, I.Q. Final offers literally unlimited replay value. And with the challenge having escalated from the previous version, this looks like a must-have for anyone who appreciates puzzle games.





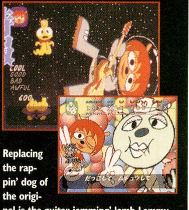




UmJammer Lammy

Available: March 18, SCEI

As we first reported last issue, Sony's follow up to their musical hit PaRappa the Rapper is on its way to Japan; now we're back with a release date, the correct spelling of the title, and more new screenshots. UmJammer Lammy will debut in Japan on March 18, with a U.S. release sometime later this year.

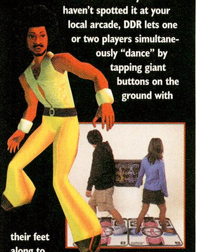


Replacing the rappin' dog of the original is the guitar-jamming' lamb Lammy.

Dance Dance Revolution

Available: Spring, Konami

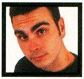
First Konami brought their popular arcade DJ game Beatmania to the PlayStation with its unique turntable controller, and now they are ready to follow it up with a home version of their hit dancing game Dance Dance Revolution. In case you haven't spotted it at your local arcade, DDR lets one or two players simultaneously "dance" by tapping giant buttons on the ground with their feet along to the beat of the music and onscreen instructions. There was some question how this game could be replicated for the PlayStation given its massive arcade cabinet setup, but Konami answered this month with pictures of a special peripheral designed just for this game. Spread out on the floor like a Twister mat, this new controller has all four directional pads just like the arcade, plus added Start, Select, X and O buttons just for the PlayStation. Get two of these unique controllers and you can even have the full arcade experience, with two players gettin' it on at once.



Reviews

The final word—official and unbiased

Meet the Critics



Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

In the brief periods of time when he wasn't on a plane, Kraig was busy arranging tickets for upcoming trips, listening to Joe describe the smells of London, and mocking discontented Chicago Bulls fans.

Favorite Genres: ***Sports, Strategy***
Current Favorites: ***Rollcage***
Can't Wait For: ***Gran Turismo 2, R-Type Delta, Star Wars: Episode One games (next issue!)***

Joe Rybicki
Deputy Editor

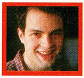
Joe spent part of this month in London, where he visited Argonaut, slept in a train station, stopped in a pub that Dickens frequented and met his all-time favorite band, New Model Army—not necessarily in that order. It was an adventure he'll not soon forget.

Favorite Genres: ***Adventure, RPG, Puzzle***
Current Favorites: ***Legend of Legaia, IQ Final***
Can't Wait For: ***NMA to again tour the States***

Wataru Maruyama
West Coast Editor

Wat is pretty excited about all the great racers coming this year. Gran Turismo 2 looks great and so does Need For Speed: High Stakes. R4: Ridge Racer Type 4 is his current racer of choice along with his unhealthy fascination with the JogCon.

Favorite Genres: ***Fighting, Racing, Adventure***
Current Favorites: ***Legend of Legaia, Silent Hill***
Can't Wait For: ***GT2, SF Alpha 3, FF VIII***



Mark MacDonald
Associate Editor

Mark didn't go anywhere this month, but had his own little vacation at work. He spent his time basking in the glow of the emergency lighting above his cube, taking in the caustic smells and frigid air of the new office. Ah!

Favorite Genres: ***Action, Adventure, RPG***
Current Favorites: ***Silent Hill, Final Fantasy VIII, IQ Final, Pocket MuuMuu***
Can't Wait For: ***R-Type Delta, Quake II, SF Alpha 3***

More Than a Feeling

by Joe Rybicki

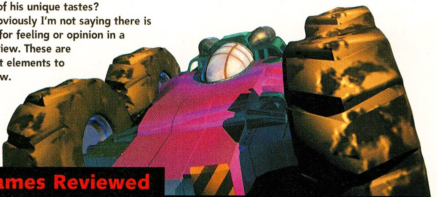
I'd like to get something off my chest. It's recently come to my attention that some folks think we reviewers are paid to simply talk about how the games we review make us feel. This is frustrating, because it implies there is no objective basis for judging games—or, by extension, any other form of art or entertainment. It implies that reviews are entirely subjective, related solely to the reviewer's taste. And this is what really gets my goat; you could probably say it's a pet peeve of mine.

Have you ever heard a game described as a "guilty pleasure?" Ever consider what exactly this phrase implies about game reviews? Consider, for a moment, if reviews really were just a report of the reviewer's feelings and gut reactions about the game. If this were the case, the phrase "guilty pleasure" wouldn't make sense. Why would the reviewer feel guilty about liking a game, unless there was some other objective standard by which to judge the game—that is to say, unless the game was actually, objectively, a poor quality game the reviewer happens to like because of his unique tastes?

Now, obviously I'm not saying there is no place for feeling or opinion in a game review. These are important elements to any review. For example, I reviewed the less-than-stellar Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi quite a while ago. This was generally (and correctly) regarded as a below-average fighting game. Nevertheless, as a Star Wars fan I was able to look beyond the poor quality and enjoy it for the familiar characters, weapons, locations, etc., and pointed out in the review that although it was (objectively) a poor-quality game, I was able to (subjectively) enjoy it and I expected other fans could do the same.

Of course, I'm not saying objective judgements are always *correct.* Reviewing art or entertainment is certainly a tricky business due to the overwhelming number of variables that affect the quality of the item being scrutinized. It's possible for a reviewer to overlook factors that would sway his overall estimation of a game. And it's possible to be flat-out wrong about what makes a good game.

But *that* is what we get paid for—to know what makes a good game, to recognize one when we see it, and to pass it on to you. And isn't that why you read reviews in the first place?



Games Reviewed

Blast Radius.......................86
Bomberman Fantasy Race .92
Bust-A-Move 99 91
Guardian's Crusade............52
Invasion From Beyond.......90
Legend of Legaia................50
NBA In the Zone 99 87
Pro 18 World Tour Golf......93
Rollcage.............................85
Rushdown...........................93
Shadow Madness................54
Street Sk8er........................92
Tai Fu 91

Box Score

It doesn't get much more simple yet effective than *OPM*'s five-disc rating system. Very few games are lucky enough to get our golden five-disc salute, but if one does, be sure to pick it up!

●○○○○
We'd rather be bludgeoned repeatedly with a frozen trout than play this game.

●●○○○
Below average. There are fundamental flaws with this game; get something better.

●●●○○
A good title. It's a fun game with some flaws that can be overlooked.

●●●●○
Definitely a topnotch game. Very good and well worth your time.

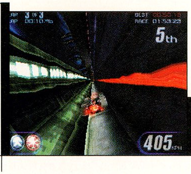
●●●●●
Fabulous! These are the games that really make you proud to own a PlayStation.

PlayStation
Rollcage

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	ATD
Publisher	Psygnosis
Genre	Racing

Rollcage



PlayStation

They just keep going and going and going...

When the company responsible for WipeOut, Destruction Derby and F1 releases a new racing game, it's a big deal. Forget for a moment the Psybadeks and Roscoe McQueens of the world; Psygnosis' racing titles have been almost universally above average, and many have been simply superb.

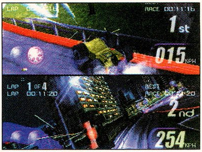
But when I heard about Rollcage, I was a bit wary. The concept—balloon-tired vehicles that flip and roll and just keep going like something out of an R/C racing fan's wet dream—seemed a little goofy. And to fans of "serious" racers like F1, Rollcage may indeed be too wacky.

But if insane, out-of-control racing is your cup of tea, Rollcage is for you. I knew I fell into this category the first time I watched my car flip in a seemingly endless barrel roll, land firmly planted on the *side* of a tunnel, and keep going like nothing happened. At first, this constant flipping and rolling may be disorienting. That's really the primary challenge of the game—not to keep the car moving in the correct direction (it tends to do that anyway as long as you hold down the accelerator), but rather to keep your bearings throughout the race. Of course, your opponents will be trying to disorient you as much as possible, either by collapsing buildings into your path or by directly attacking you with any of a handful of spectacular-looking weapons.

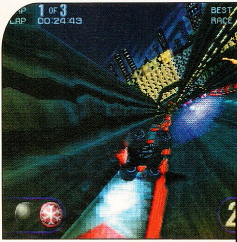
Once you get the hang of sticking to the track, you should have no trouble breezing through the first level of challenge. But a more intense level of difficulty awaits you upon completing an entire season on Easy Mode, and respectable bonuses make the effort worthwhile.

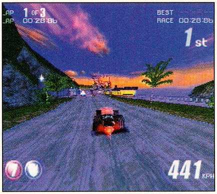
My only major complaint is the length of the tracks. They're extremely short, which tends to make winning very easy for the experienced player and very difficult for the newcomer, at least when competing against a human. Some grainy graphics and slowdown hurt a bit, as well; the clean look of WipeOut XL would have helped a bit here. Nevertheless, it's an entertaining game that's well worth a look.

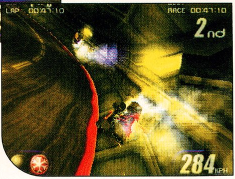
—Joe Rybicki

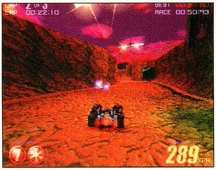


The Two-Player Mode (above) can be extremely entertaining, but don't expect to do too well; you'll find yourself checking out your opponent's screen each time he goes into a spectacular flip and soon find yourself doing the same.









Gravity is all but meaningless in Rollcage, as you can easily use walls (above) and even ceilings to navigate the tight turns.

Box Score

Pros

- Extremely entertaining racing
- Some great weapons
- Decent collection of extras
- Pretty good soundtrack

Cons

- Easy Mode is very easy; Hard Mode is very hard
- Some graininess and slowdown
- Tracks are too short

> "If insane, out-of-control racing is your cup of tea, Rollcage is for you."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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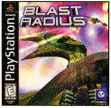
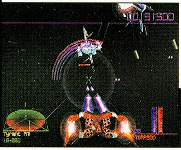
Rating



Developer	Camden
Publisher	Psygnosis
Genre	Action

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible

Blast Radius



PlayStation

Colony Wars, without the frustration

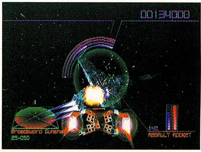
A few months ago I reviewed Colony Wars: Vengeance and hated the game's ridiculous difficulty level and badly designed save-game system. If you agreed with me (you did agree with me, didn't you?), then Blast Radius might be for you. Think of it as Colony Wars with a coherent story—and without most of the annoying crap.

Blast Radius is a no-frills space simulation. You jump right in, and within seconds you should be competently blasting spaceships to bits. The difficulty curve from mission to mission is handled well, and if one seems too hard, it's probably because you didn't buy enough weapon upgrades or you didn't pick the best ones (with the money you got from destroying enemy ships). While the missions aren't that complex, they don't need to be. There is a large variety of enemy fighters in Blast Radius, and they come in all shapes and sizes. The gameplay stays fresh since you must constantly learn how to attack the next incarnation of fighter thrown at you, especially the battleships.

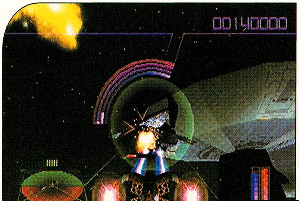
Not only is it fun to attack these, but it's also a treat to just see what they look like. The spacecraft designs are colorful and creative and the accompanying effects are quite impressive, too. Thrusters glow and trail the ships, and their weaponry is discharged with impressive light-sourcing, not to mention the dazzling effects that follow when they hit their mark. None of this takes a big toll on the game's engine, as the frame-rate usually manages to keep the gameplay smooth.

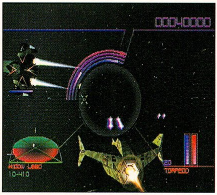
My biggest gripe concerning Blast Radius is that you can only save your game after completing groups of missions. This can get really annoying, especially if you beat a tough mission, then die on the next. Also, there is no two-player split-screen battle mode. There is a link-cable mode, but how many people really have the resources or time to set that up?

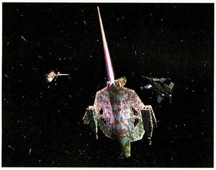
But despite its lack of solid multiplayer modes and in-depth features, space cadets should give Blast Radius a try. ***—Kraig Kujawa***

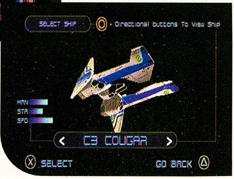


Larger battleships make you think twice about the attack angle you take on them (above).









There are four different ships, each with slightly different capabilities. The one shown above is an all-around solid fighter with few weaknesses or strengths.

Box Score

Pros

- Excellent graphics
- Easy to learn
- Appropriate techno music during gameplay

Cons

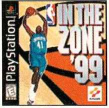
- No split-screen multiplayer option
- Save-game system is unnecessarily restrictive
- No in-depth story

> **"Think of it as Colony Wars with a coherent story—and without most of the annoying crap."**

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ◐ ○

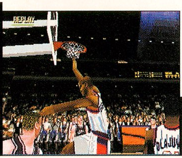
Rating



1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1~6 blocks
Analog Control Compatible

Developer	Konami
Publisher	Konami
Genre	Sports

NBA In the Zone '99



PlayStation

Konami delivers a great post-strike hoops game

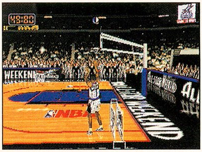
With EA Sports' NBA Live 99 prematurely arriving before the NBA strike ended, and 989 Studios suddenly cancelling their NBA ShootOut '99, Konami's NBA In the Zone '99 is in the odd (and somewhat fortunate) position of being the only post-strike NBA game around.

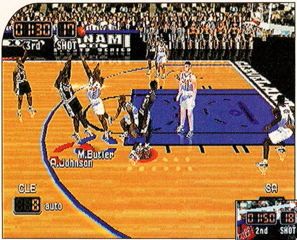
With its fast-paced, arcade-oriented gameplay, In the Zone '99 brings a nice balance to this year's round of PlayStation basketball games. Although it features on-court play calling, player substitutions and decent artificial intelligence, ITZ '99 is still a thinly veiled arcade game. In other words, relying on twitch skills pays off much more than moving the ball around and taking advantage of mismatches.

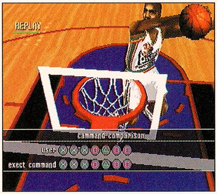
The gameplay is what you might expect from such a game: There's lots of dunks, steals and blocks. You can adjust the game's difficulty to temper these, but they are still much more frequent than what you'll generally see in a true simulation. The graphics are impressive, and although the player animations are exaggerated in spots, they move much more fluidly than in other basketball simulations. Some of the best basketball player animations I've seen occur when your player slides forward after trying to abruptly pull up from running, passes by pushing the ball from his chest during a full-out run, and my favorite—when a player gets knocked to his ass because he's tripped up or is the victim of a viscous dunk. There's also an innovative Slam Dunk contest that plays similar to Simon Says, and a Three-Point Shootout as well.

Unfortunately, ITZ '99 has a handful of small annoyances. The control is a little jerky (especially if you don't use an analog controller) and like all ITZ games, the passing is still too floaty, giving you a nice glimpse at what it would be like to play basketball on the Moon (you never know—there's already two franchises in Canada).

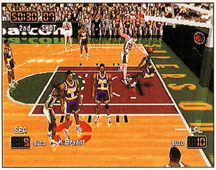
Regardless, I had a lot of fun with ITZ '99. Although it isn't as well-rounded as NBA Live 99, I could see casual hoops fans really getting into it. ***—Kraig Kujawa***

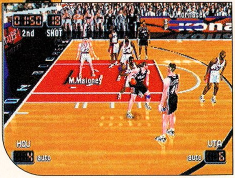






If you don't remember the right buttons to hit in the Slam Dunk competition, the results can be quite embarrassing (left). For a quick diversion, ITZ '99 offers a Three-Point Shootout (above).





Trying to post up with Jeff Hornacek is an honorable but futile maneuver (above). Still, it's amusing enough to give it a try now and again.

Box Score

Pros

- Great player animations
- Innovative slam dunk competition
- Nice 3D graphics

Cons

- Subpar atmosphere
- Unrealistic passing
- Player control is occasionally jerky

"In the Zone '99 brings a nice balance to this year's round of PlayStation basketball games."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ◐ ○

Rating

OVER 2000 WAYS TO SHOW YOUR ENEMIES HOW MUCH YOU CARE.

Why limit yourself to a dozen, hell even a hundred, different weapon choices when you can have thousands?

It's time to remove the shackles of 2D, top down strategy games. Because in Warzone 2100, you have complete control over unit designs. As a result, it'll be your wits and ability to create an invincible battle arsenal that will save your hide from extinction.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIT DESIGN – 400 technologies allow you to design and build more than 2000 battle units. Turret, body and propulsion design options allow you to create anything from cyborgs to flamethrower tanks to V-TOL aircraft.

SUPERIOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – recycle the experience of field units into bigger, better and even more fierce war machines. And as a Commander gains experience, the greater number of units he can control and the more accurate his laser designation becomes.

FULL 3D BATTLEFIELDS – lightning fast, fully functional 3D game engine with rotatable and zoomable cameras for fast and furious gaming action. Strategically placed radar units warn you of hidden enemy units and allow you to lob mortar shells over mountain obstructions.

IT'S NOW TIME TO TAKE YOUR FATE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS. SO GET INTO OUR VAST 3D WORLD:

DESIGN, DEPLOY AND DESTROY.

PlayStation ®

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CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

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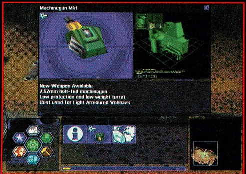
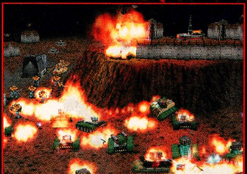
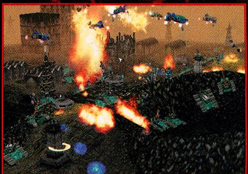


Machinegun Mk1

New Weapon Available
7.62mm belt-fed machinegun
Low protection and low weight turret
Best used for Light Armoured Vehicles





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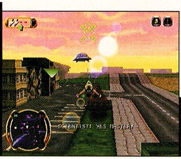
V1
WARZONE
2100
STRATEGY BY DESIGN
Pumpkin Studios
EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
GO TO WAR!

Developer King of the Jungle
Publisher GT Interactive
Genre Action

PlayStation
INVASION FROM BEYOND

1 Player
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Invasion From Beyond


SCIENTIST: YES MASTER

PlayStation

Orson Welles is turning in his grave

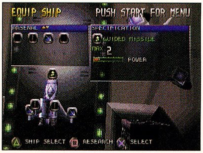
Saving the Earth from a hokey alien invasion is really a pain in the ass, or so it would seem after playing Invasion From Beyond. All right, I never assumed it would be easy, but the sheer tediousness of this game makes *War of the Worlds* seem like a picnic.

While Invasion From Beyond is basically a shooter, it is a deceptively in-depth game—probably too complex for its own good, in fact. To save Earth from the alien invasion, missions must be completed by accomplishing a slew of objectives (escort vehicles, kill lots of green men, save humans). If one objective isn't met, the whole mission must be restarted from scratch. This wouldn't be horrible if the gameplay weren't so outrageously frustrating. It's so incredibly tough to work through each level because if one dinky thing goes wrong in the middle of a hellstorm, you're forced to start over. For example, a task of clearing a roadblock might not be completed because one stray shot out of hundreds blew up a "mission critical" vehicle. And that happens in the early stages of the game. On top of that are unavoidable cheap shots that constantly bombard your spacecraft. Clearly, the progression of difficulty in this game is unbalanced and the occasionally ambiguous objectives don't help either.

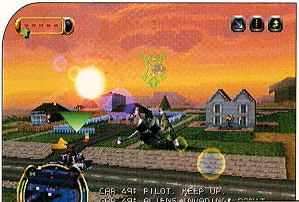
Fighting the saucers can be more manageable if you learn to collect items that allow you to "research" new, more powerful weapons. But you'll need every bit of firepower you can get, because there are so many enemies on screen it's like flying in the middle of a bee swarm. Suffice to say, the action is fast and furious. Fortunately, it is handled well by a silky-smooth frame-rate that remains constant despite the legions of saucers and showers of snazzy lighting effects.

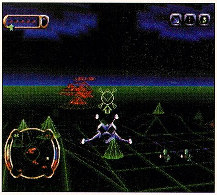
But, like *Mars Attacks!* proved, having fancy lookin' special effects doesn't mean the product will be an entertaining one. Invasion From Beyond was a great idea that just wasn't refined enough.

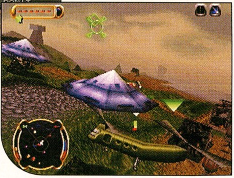
—Kraig Kujawa

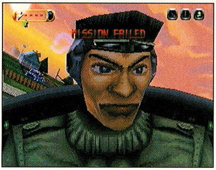


Equip your ship's weapons with the technology you mine from destroyed saucers (above). The training simulator is a nice feature, but doesn't help too much (left).


CAR 49: PILOT, KEEP UP.
CAR 49: ALIENS INVADING! DON'T PANIC!







Each plane has a different pilot, who is generally very ugly-looking (left).

Box Score

Pros
- Nice, cheesy atmosphere
- Tight control
- Smooth frame-rate

Cons
- Missions are way too long
- Difficulty is unbalanced
- Lacks overall polish

> "The sheer tediousness of this game makes War of the Worlds seem like a picnic."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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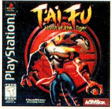
Rating



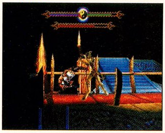
Developer	Dreamworks
Publisher	Activision
Genre	Action

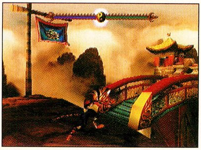
1 Player

Memory Card 1 block

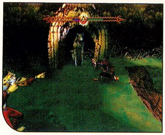
T'ai Fu

Tiger-style Kung Fu falls short





The game looks pretty good when you're not moving, but choppy scrolling and occasional slowdown take its toll on T'ai Fu.



It's sad, but T'ai Fu is basically the same game as Eidos' Ninja except the main character is a tiger. But to be fair, the fighting action is actually better than Ninja—with tons of moves and combos to master.

The high point of the game is the relatively well-done graphics and environments, but that changes once you start encountering enemies. The action suffers from slowdown and the scrolling isn't very smooth even without enemies on screen. Furthermore, the level design is meant to be challenging with all sorts of twists and hidden areas, but it all seems random, especially the power-up placement, which is haphazard to the point of being useless.

Controlling your character is also a chore because of the horrible collision detection—particularly when you walk and jump up hills. There are some inclines your character can walk up without any problem and others that look exactly the same where he has no other recourse but to jump. There are buggy areas where you'll fall to your death when you clearly shouldn't have and walls your character will get stuck on.

Obviously, T'ai Fu would have greatly benefitted from more bug testing and refinement. Even if it did, the game lacks both originality and any significant (no pun intended) punch. *—Wataru Maruyama*

Box Score

Pros
- Lots of fighting moves
- Long and challenging levels

Cons
- Bad collision detection
- Camera angles need fine-tuning
- Frequent slowdown
- Sloppy controls

● ◐ ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

Developer	Taito
Publisher	Acclaim
Genre	Puzzle

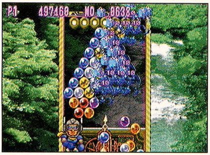
boxart not available

1 or 2 Players

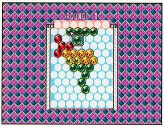
Memory Card 1~6 blocks

Bust-A-Move 99

Acclaim bursts their franchise's bubble



There are hundreds of puzzles, but if you're insane and need more, use the puzzle editor to make your own (right).



When Natsume released Bust-A-Move 4, the best version of the franchise to date, Acclaim must have realized it made this version of the game obsolete. Instead, they renamed it, and put out what could be the most useless sequel ever to be released for the PlayStation, Bust-A-Move '99.

Don't get me wrong, Bust-A-Move '99 is a great puzzle game. It is entirely addicting, and has plenty of game modes to keep anyone busy (Puzzle, Two-Player, Edit, Arcade). The big problem here is that it's actually a huge step backward from Bust-A-Move 4, a game released only months ago. That version had a couple significant changes, and included virtually all the features that are in this game. Sure, there are some subtle differences with characters, background art, music and bubble types, but they are all superfluous, and most are better on BAM 4.

It's a bit surprising and very disappointing that Acclaim didn't attempt to add something significant to update this version of the franchise. But instead of my trying to figure out exactly what they were thinking, I'll just throw this game out and enjoy some Bust-A-Move 4 instead. Only get this game if you find it dirt cheap. *—Kraig Kujawa*

Box Score

Pros
- Great puzzle game but...

Cons
- Bust-A-Move 4 is much better
- No analog or vibration support.

● ● ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

Developer	Hudson
Publisher	Atlus
Genre	Racing

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible

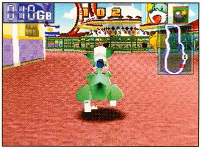
Bomberman Fantasy Race

Not a bad way to spend an afternoon

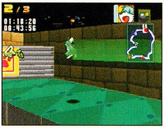
Let's get one thing straight right away: Bomberman Fantasy Race is about as far from a serious racing title as you can get without leaving the genre entirely. As such, it's got plenty of problems that I'd attack an ordinary racer for, like horrible handling and spotty collision detection, to name a few. But BFR *isn't* an ordinary racer, so these criticisms are only relevant as a warning that if you're looking for a real racer, you need to look elsewhere.

There are, however, more than a couple flaws with the game as it is. With the Bomberman series having such a multiplayer focus, I'm disappointed the designers didn't include more than a two-player Vs. Mode. Four-way split screen—or at least link capability—would have been much more ideal. It's also surprising, what with the relatively simple graphics, that the game suffers from horrible slowdown with just a few competitors on screen. The lack of analog support is also very disappointing, as is the tame challenge level (I managed to beat the game in an afternoon).

Still, BFR is a simple, entertaining diversion, especially for the younger crowd that appears to be its target audience. For the rest of us, it's a decent rental or a fair multiplayer choice, but little more. ***—Joe Rybicki***



Scattered throughout the courses are turbo pads mounted on the walls, which the racers can bounce off of for a tremendous burst of speed (left).



Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Simple and entertaining • Good two-player action • Innovative use of Bomberman formula	• MUCH too easy to beat • No analog • Bad slowdown • No more than two players • Poor handling

● ● ◐ ○ ○

OPM Rating

Developer	Micro Cabin
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Genre	Action

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible

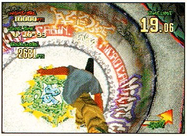
Street Sk8er

Disappointing, but the only skater in town

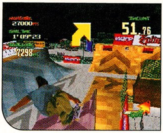
Well, it finally happened. After a surprising lag of more than three years, the PlayStation finally has a dedicated skateboarding game. Unfortunately, although Street Sk8er pulls off the atmosphere quite well, there's not much substance behind it.

The first thing skaters might notice about the game is the dead-on soundtrack. Full of skate-punk all-stars like the venerable All, the music is solid throughout. The game also earns high marks in animation and track design, which balances insane ramps and jumps with everyday elements like stairs and benches to mix things up.

The problem is, the game is just too simplistic. First, the skater has a choice of only *four* available tricks when leaving a jump. The game mixes it up by executing different tricks depending on the skater's speed and ability, but come on! Skating is all about trick variety and innovation; to miss that is to miss the point entirely. Other problems include the small number of courses (three, with three tiny bonus areas), lots of graphic problems, a very limited challenge level, and the mind-boggling lack of analog support. I suppose this is a must-have for skate fans by default, but it could have been so much better. ***—Joe Rybicki***



Expert Sk8ers can get tremendous air in the Bowl bonus area (above) after beating the tournament twice.



Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Nice animations • Great soundtrack • Long, mostly interesting courses	• Too-simplistic trick system • Limited number of courses • No analog • Lots of graphic problems

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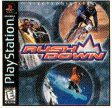
OPM Rating



1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible
Analog Control Compatible

Developer Canal
Publisher Electronic Arts
Genre Racing

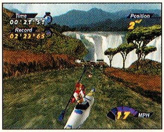
Rushdown

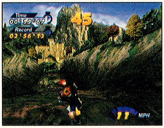
Don't hurry to buy these extreme games

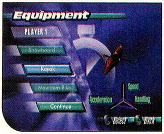
One of the biggest problems with games that offer different kinds of racing in one package is none of the events are as fleshed out as they could be. Inevitably, the end result is a bunch of mediocre racing styles stuffed into one package.

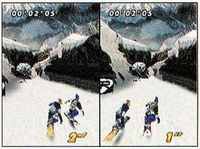
Rushdown is a perfect example of this. By offering three distinctively different "extreme sports"—kayaking, mountain bike racing and snowboarding—it seems the developers of the game spread themselves too thin. Instead of each game having its own distinct look and feel, all of them are woefully identical to one another, except for aesthetic changes and speed of gameplay (kayaks go slower than bikes, you know). This wouldn't be so bad if all three of the games were similarly fun, but that's not the case. The kayaking, while novel, is too slow and easy to be exciting, while the snowboarding and mountain biking are visually unimpressive and often difficult to control. All suffer from questionable collision detection and ample polygonal pop-up.

If you want a racing game, get one that is more polished. The only reason you would want Rushdown is if you've desperately been waiting for a kayaking or mountain biking PlayStation game. *—Kraig Kujawa*









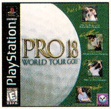
It can get a little hard to see the track when playing in two-player. That can be disastrous, given the amount of obstacles (above).

Box Score

Pros
- Offers two sports not on PS until now
- Lots of courses
- Licensed equipment

Cons
- Bland graphics
- Sloppy gameplay
- All three sports are nearly identical to each other

● ● ○ ○ ○
OPM Rating



1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1~6 blocks

Developer Intelligent Gms.
Publisher Psygnosis
Genre Sports

Pro 18 World Tour Golf

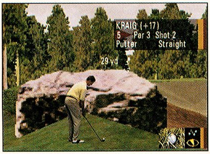
The oddest golf game ever

It's annoying to see that Psygnosis is adding to the parade of mediocre PlayStation golf simulations with Pro 18. Apparently, developer Intelligent Games has had a lot of experience doing golf games, but their expertise doesn't pay off here.

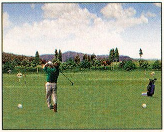
Pro 18 is the most bizarre golf game I've ever played. It contains three courses—Coeur d'Alene, Royal County Down and The Lost City—that were seemingly picked at random. These are actual golf courses that exist in Northern Ireland, South Africa and.... Idaho?!

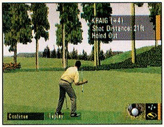
Those odd courses look pretty good, dare I say even photorealistic in spots. But they are far from perfect. Sometimes the course detail is too sparse or your digitized golfer looks like he's awkwardly pasted onto the scenery. Also, the game has a very static feel to it. There is no use of cool camera angles to show the ball in flight. Just a swing, then a quick shot of the ball landing. There's just no feeling of excitement or action, like there is in Hot Shots Golf, or even in Tiger Woods 99, to a lesser extent. In fact, I almost fell asleep while playing it for this review.

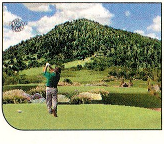
Really, there's not much reason to give this game a try. There are plenty of options and features that give Pro 18 some considerable depth, but none of this matters unless you have a fetish about playing golf in South Africa or Idaho. *—Kraig Kujawa*



Ladies and gentlemen, OPM presents: a golfer's worst nightmare (above).







Box Score

Pros
- Lots of game modes
- Good graphics
- Realistic play
- Large rocks in middle of course

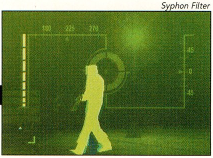
Cons
- Lame course choices
- Entirely more boring than a golf game should be

● ● ○ ○ ○
OPM Rating

Review Recap

The final word—official and unbiased

Syphon Filter



A roundup of the most notable games of recent months

Brave Fencer Musashi

Square ventures out of the cozy turn-based confines of the traditional RPG and ends up with a fine action/RPG, with the emphasis on action. Young Musashi has at his command a wide range of moves that he learns by defeating his enemies. The game can feel a bit linear at points, but the good graphics, excellent control, and variety of action, puzzles and minigames make Brave Fencer well worth a look.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Civilization II

This is a rare thing in the world of PC-to-PlayStation ports: a completely faithful translation of an incredibly complex game. Civ II has everything strategy fans could ask for, allowing players to manage every facet of an entire civilization. Whether your goal is technological supremacy or simply global domination, you'll find plenty to whet your appetite for power.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Contender

In contrast to Knockout Kings' statistic-heavy simulation, Contender is a genuinely fun boxing game that takes cues from classics like Punch-Out!! and Ring King. Sure, the baloony characters may look a bit goofy, but no one ever said boxers are supposed to be attractive.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

The third time's the charm for Naughty Dog's immensely popular marsupial. The latest game includes some much-needed variety in the form of widely different areas and gameplay mechanics, as well as graphics that are simply without peer.

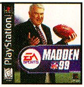
OPM Rating ●●●●●

FIFA 99

It's amazing what a difference a year can make. This time around EA gets their act together to put out their best soccer game ever. In-depth features, improved graphics and phenomenal multiplay make it the soccer game to beat.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Madden NFL 99



Simply the deepest, most realistic NFL football game on the PlayStation. No, it may not have the graphical punch of its major competitor, but it's got the stuff where it counts. This excellent pigskin simulation is the ideal choice for the die-hard football fan.

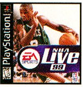
OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Metal Gear Solid

Some have said that this game doesn't live up to its prerelease hype because it's just too short. We say the game is so packed with extras, secrets and "holy-crap-that's-cool" innovations that the 10- to 15-hour completion time doesn't hurt it enough to matter. The story is wonderfully engrossing, the graphical style topnotch, and the voice-overs are the best yet. It was our Game of the Year for a reason. You need to own this true classic.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

NBA Live 99



EA's newest installment in the Live series sports AI improved from the previous version, loads of options and features, and improved graphics that actually show the players' emotions through an almost creepy use of facial expressions. The frame-rate could use some work, though, and because of the prolonged NBA lockout, the rosters are woefully out of date. Still, it's one of the best b-ball games yet.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

NCAA Football 99

A development team all its own has made NCAA 99 one hell of a college football game. Excellently challenging AI, loads of options and great polygonal graphics make this one a winner on all counts. And although its frame-rate could use a boost, EA's 32-bit football games have always been about realism over action. Nice job!

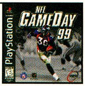
OPM Rating ●●●●◐

NFL Blitz

"Oh, that HAD to hurt!" To everyone's surprise, the console version actually more than does justice to Midway's arcade hit. Throw in Dual Shock support and Tournament and Season modes and you've got one excellent port on your hands. Fast, addictive, brutal and just plain fun.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

NFL GameDay 99



Still fighting head to head with Madden, GameDay takes the looser, more arcade-like route to gridiron glory. Crisper graphics, more detailed polygonal models and more thorough player animations are just the visual updates; the AI has been tweaked as

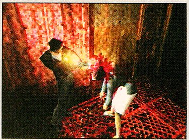
recap pick of the month

Silent Hill

Calling this game a Resident Evil clone is something like calling the PlayStation a 3DO clone. Sure, the games share some similar qualities: the horror theme, the spooky atmosphere, the real-life setting. But Silent Hill has moved into the territory blazed by Resident Evil and made it all its own, refining the horror formula in nearly every way. To use another analogy, where Resident Evil could be compared to movies like Night of the Living Dead, Silent Hill would be better compared to more genuinely disturbing films like The Exorcist and The Shining (Kubrick's, of course). That's how much the game plays with your mind.

Sure, the controls leave a lot to be desired, and the graphics could use a bit of work, but the puzzles are generally quite good and the story is as engrossing as you would want. Experience the terror for yourself; you won't be disappointed.

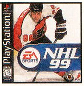
OPM Rating ●●●●○



well, albeit not as much as one would hope. Still one of the best football games available.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

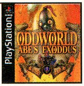
NHL 99



In an unfortunate example of why you shouldn't try to fix something that ain't broken, EA made some changes to their stunning NHL 98 engine and ended up with a slower, choppier game than last year's version. The inclusion of some new coaching strategies, a shot power meter and the Coaching Drill Mode almost compensates for its flaws—but not quite; last year's is still better.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus



The loveable Abe returns in what amounts to little more than a collection of new levels to add to the excellent Abe's Oddysee. Further variety in environments helps differentiate between the games, however, as does the ability to possess more creatures, the increased GameSpeak vocabulary and the vector of Mudokon emotions. The much-needed Quiksave eliminates the pesky checkpoints of the previous game. An all-around topnotch title.

OPM Rating ●●●●◐

Rogue Trip

PlayStation
Rogue Trip

SingleTrac proves that they can do vehicle combat even without the SCEA-owned Twisted Metal license. Fast action, good controls and a new gameplay element in the form of the Tourist make up for some unimaginative level design and lots of graphical gaffes.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Rugrats: Search for Reptar

PlayStation
Rugrats

This is a kid game truly designed for no one but kids. The little tykes will enjoy the familiar characters, colorful environments and simple game objectives. They're most likely to enjoy the "Activities" like Mini-Golf and Egg Hunt more than the "real" game, though, due to the touchy controls.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

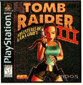
Syphon Filter

PlayStation
syphon filter

This game of high-tech espionage has drawn more than a few comparisons with Metal Gear Solid, but stands easily on its own merits. Although the game suffers from minor graphics and control issues, these pale in comparison to the imaginative level design and spectacular AI. A good bet for those seeking a thinking man's action game.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Tomb Raider III



It's frustrating that two full years after the original title this game still looks and plays fundamentally the same. What was revolutionary back then is getting a bit tired. Still, this episode features the most realistic levels yet, most notably the city levels (light years ahead of the Venice levels of the previous game). But the controls are irritating, the levels are *very* unbalanced, and the game is loaded with bugs. Patience will pay off with this one, and you'll need a lot of it.

OPM Rating ●●●◐○

Tomba!

PlayStation
TOMBA!

The platform veterans at Whoopee Camp have come up with an entertaining, and surprisingly deep, platform-based adventure that in some places could even be called an RPG. More than 130 mini-quests are carried out in a huge, colorful, polygonal world populated with dozens of wacky characters. Whimsical fun for the whole family.

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Twisted Metal III

PlayStation
TWISTED METAL III

Without SingleTrac at the helm of this beloved franchise, the game is far less imaginative than the previous versions. If you can't stand being without the familiar characters, this is for you. Otherwise, V8 and Rogue Trip are much more entertaining.

OPM Rating ●●◐○○

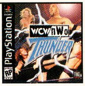
Vigilante 8

PlayStation
VIGILANTE 8
ACTIVISION

This game of vehicular combat takes the formula set forth by Twisted Metal and runs with it. Gigantic, realistic environments are the arenas, funky '70s characters are your enemies, and your vehicles range from a school bus to a (hidden) alien spacecraft. The powerful engine even allows huge craters to be blown in the ground. It's a blast!

OPM Rating ●●●●○

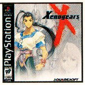
WCW/nWo Thunder



This is the unfortunate result of all the faction-and-alliance melodrama that's made wrestling so popular of late. Thunder includes lots of treats for the die-hard fan, but fails to deliver anything resembling fun. Bad AI, horrible controls and a useless camera make this one for avid fans only.

OPM Rating ●○○○○

Xenogears



Square proves they still got it with an immense RPG with an entirely unique engine and loads of other innovations. A great story, a necessity for any good RPG, is complemented by great graphics. A worthwhile experience for any RPG-er!

OPM Rating ●●●●○

Ratings at a Glance

Ace Combat 2	●●●●●
Activision Classics	●●○○○
Batman & Robin	●○○○○
Blasto	●●●◐○
Breath of Fire III	●●●◐○
C: Contra Adventure	●◐○○○
Castlevania: SotN	●●●●●
Col. Wars: Vengeance	●●●◐○
Crash Bandicoot 2	●●●●○
Dead or Alive	●●●●◐
Final Fantasy VII	●●●●●
Forsaken	●●●●○
G.Darius	●●●●○
Gex: Enter the Gecko	●●●◐○
Gran Turismo	●●●●●
Heart of Darkness	●●●●○
Hot Shots Golf	●●●●○
Judge Dredd	●◐○○○
Kartia	●●●●○
The Lost World: JP	●○○○○
Micro Machines	●●●●●
MLB 99	●●●●○
Mortal Kombat 4	●●●◐○
NBA Shoot Out 98	●●●◐○
Need For Speed III	●●●●○
NFL Xtreme	●●○○○
One	●●●●○
OW: Abe's Oddysee	●●●●○
Parasite Eve	●●●●○
Pitfall 3D	●●○○○
Point Blank	●●●◐○
Resident Evil 2 (DS)	●●●●●
Road Rash 3D	●●●○○
SaGa Frontier	●●●◐○
San Francisco Rush	●●●○○
Soul Blade	●●●●◐
Spyro the Dragon	●●●●○
Tekken 3	●●●●●
Test Drive 4	●●●◐○
Tomb Raider	●●●●○
Tomb Raider II	●●●●◐
Triple Play 99	●●◐○○

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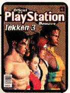

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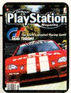

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Metal Gear Solid Preview Gran Turismo Review

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non-playables: Parasite Eve, Rival Schools, NFL GameDay 99

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Tomb Raider III Metal Gear Solid Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: MediEvil, WarGames: Defcon 1, G. Darius, Dragon Seeds, Colony Wars: Vengeance, Future Cop L.A.P.D., non-playables: Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Abe's Exoddus, Brave Fencer Musashi, Rugrats, T'ai Fu, Tenchu, You Don't Know Jack

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Metal Gear Solid Crash Bandicoot: WARPED Strategy

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☐

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1998 Editors' Awards Tomb Raider III Strategy

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non-playables: NCAA Final Four '99, Gex 3, Jackie Chan Stuntmaster, Shadow Madness, WCW/nWo Thunder

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PlayStation Dictionary Syphon Filter Strategy

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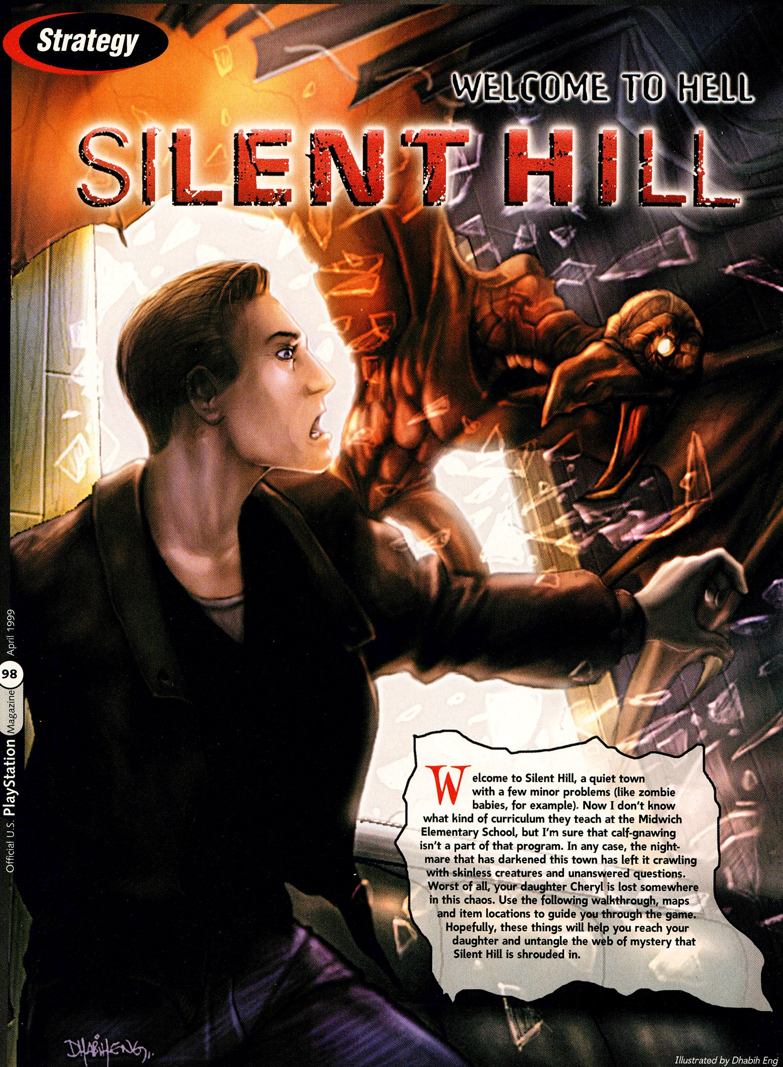
non-playables: NCAA Final Four '99, Guardian's Crusade

☐

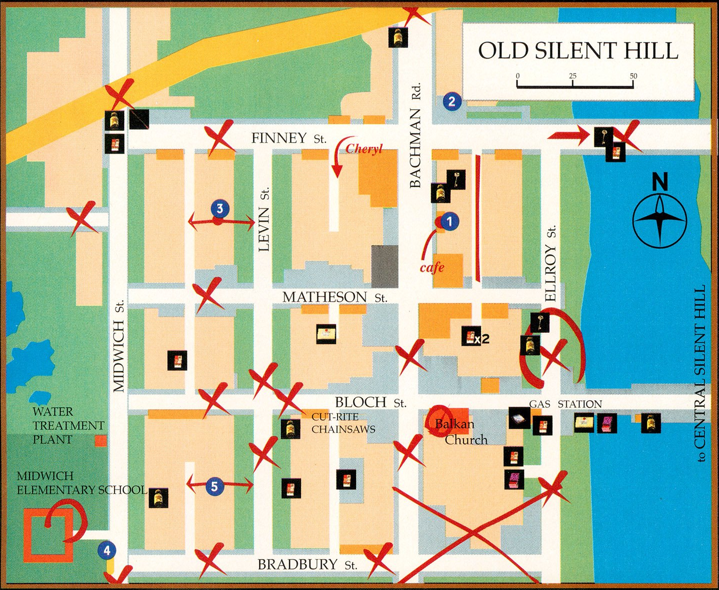
WELCOME TO HELL

SILENT HILL



Welcome to Silent Hill, a quiet town with a few minor problems (like zombie babies, for example). Now I don't know what kind of curriculum they teach at the Midwich Elementary School, but I'm sure that calf-gnawing isn't a part of that program. In any case, the nightmare that has darkened this town has left it crawling with skinless creatures and unanswered questions. Worst of all, your daughter Cheryl is lost somewhere in this chaos. Use the following walkthrough, maps and item locations to guide you through the game. Hopefully, these things will help you reach your daughter and untangle the web of mystery that Silent Hill is shrouded in.

Illustrated by Dhabih Eng


OLD SILENT HILL
0
25
50
N
FINNEY St.
Cheryl
BACHMAN Rd.
LEVIN St.
ELLROY St.
MIDWICH St.
MATHESON St.
cafe
x2
BLOCH St.
GAS STATION
CUT-RITE CHAINSAWS
Balkan Church
WATER TREATMENT PLANT
MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BRADBURY St.
to CENTRAL SILENT HILL
1
2
3
4
5

SILENT HILL RESIDENTIAL AREA

Yes
No

There is a Key of "Lion".
Take it?

1 For starters, grab the Residential Map, Flashlight and Kitchen Knife. You won't be able to get the Pocket Radio until you try to leave. The Radio will crackle to warn you when a creature is nearing your position.

2 Head to the alley where you followed Cheryl and look at the pages from her sketchbook. Scribbled on the paper are the words *to school*, pointing you to the Midwich Elementary School.

3 All the streets to the school are impassable. Head to the blocked area at Levin and Matheson streets to find the note directing you to the doghouse on Levin Street. There is a key to this house hidden inside the doghouse. The back door is secured with three locks, all of which you'll need to find keys for. The map to the left of the door will show you their locations, which are highlighted on the map above.

4 Once you have unlocked the back door, search the streets for additional health, ammo and weapons. When you feel you're ready, make your way to the grade school.

Yes
No

There is a Steel pipe.
Take it?

MAP ITEM KEY

- Health Drink
- First-Aid Kit
- Handgun Ammo
- Shotgun Shells
- Save Point
- Eclipse Keys
- Steel Pipe

ITEM LOCATIONS

Reference the following numbers to the map:

1 *Cafe* - Kitchen Knife, Flashlight, Pocket Radio, Save Point, Health Drink x2

2 *Convenience Store* - Channeling Stone, First-Aid Kit, Health Drink x3, Save Point

3 *Dog House* - Save POINT, HEALTH DRINK X2, HANDGUN AMMO X3

4 *School Bus* - Save Point, Health Drink x2

5 *K. Gordon House* - Save Point, Handgun Ammo x2

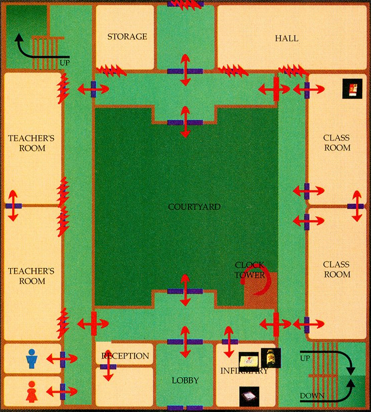
MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1 Many of the doors on the first floor are either locked or barricaded. If you can't open a locked door from one side, you can unlock it from the other. The objective here is to find two medallions needed to open the base of the clock tower in the courtyard. You'll need to get the Gold Medallion first.

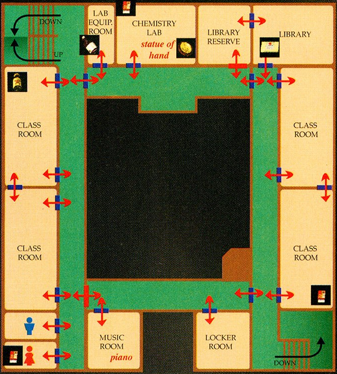
2 Go to the Lab Equipment Room on the second floor and get the Chemical from the shelf. Next door is a statue of a hand holding the Gold Medallion. Use the Chemical to disintegrate the hand and pick up the medallion.

3 Go to the clock tower in the courtyard and insert the Gold Medallion. This will open the cover to the piano in the music room. Inside the music room you will have to play a series of keys to get the Silver Medallion (see diagram below).

4 Once you have the second medallion, return to the courtyard and place it where it belongs. The last thing you need to do is turn on the generator in the boiler room. After you've thrown the switch, enter the base of the clock tower. When you emerge on the other side you'll find yourself back in the courtyard, but is it the same place? This "evil" form of the school will need to be entirely re-explored.


STORAGE
HALL
UP
TEACHER'S ROOM
CLASS ROOM
COURTYARD
TEACHER'S ROOM
CLOCK TOWER
CLASS ROOM
RECEPTION
LOBBY
INFIRMARY
UP
DOWN

MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 1F


DOWN
UP
LAB EQUIP. ROOM
CHEMISTRY LAB
statue of hand
LIBRARY RESERVE
LIBRARY
CLASS ROOM
CLASS ROOM
CLASS ROOM
CLASS ROOM
MUSIC ROOM
piano
LOCKER ROOM
DOWN

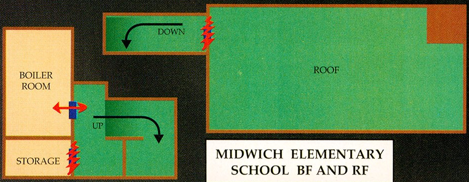
MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2F

MAP ITEM KEY

- Blocked Door
- Locked Door
- Open Doors
- Gold Medallion
- Silver Medallion
- Chemical

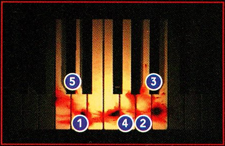
*Locked doors can be accessed from the opposite side. Blocked doors are inaccessible.

Turn on the generator after using both medallions at the clock tower.


DOWN
ROOF
BOILER ROOM
UP
STORAGE

MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BF AND RF

PIANO PUZZLE



Scrawled on the blackboard in blood are the clues to this puzzle. Hit the keys in the order above to receive the Silver Medallion.

"EVIL" MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1 Once inside the "evil" school, grab the Rubber Ball from the Storage room and head for the northern-most Class Room. Get the yellow Picture Card and go to the room connected to the Reception area. Use the Picture card to unlock the door and enter it.

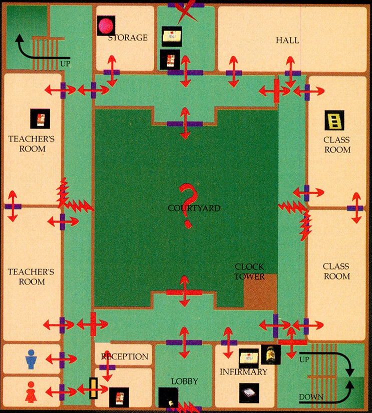
2 When you enter the restroom, you will be warped to the second-floor girls' room. There is no significance to this, except to get several boxes of ammo. Next door in the boys' room is a very useful Shotgun that you don't want to miss.

3 Continue through the pair of Teachers' Rooms and head up to the second floor. Make your way to the Locker Room and investigate the rattling locker. There is nothing inside, but as you leave, 4 you'll find a Library Reserve Key.

Go to the Library Reserve and then to the Library to find a clue about defeating the first boss. You now need to head to the roof to find the key to the locked Classroom. On the right side of the roof you'll find a drain with the key stuck in it. Put the Rubber Ball in the drain in the corner and then turn the drainage valve on. The key will be washed all the way down 5 to the courtyard.

Get the Classroom Key and return to the second floor to use it. Go through the Classrooms to reach the stairs leading down 6 to the basement.

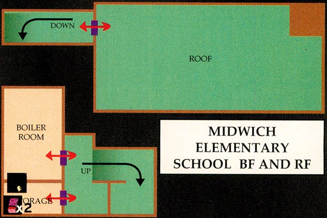
Stock up on Shotgun Shells in the basement Storage Room and then enter the Boiler Room. Turn each of the valves twice to open the path to a platform that will


UP
STORAGE
HALL
TEACHER'S ROOM
CLASS ROOM
COURTYARD
TEACHER'S ROOM
CLOCK TOWER
CLASS ROOM
RECEPTION
LOBBY
INFIRMARY
UP
DOWN

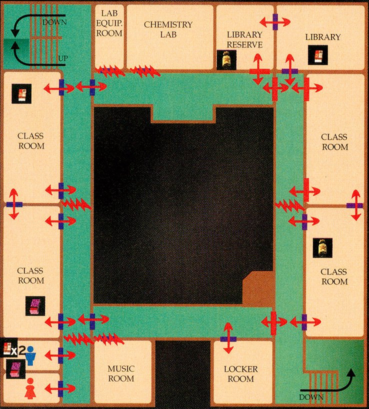
MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 1F

MAP ITEM KEY

● Rubber Ball
▨ Picture Card
▨ Classroom Key
▨ Ampoule


DOWN
ROOF
BOILER ROOM
UP
ORAGE
x2

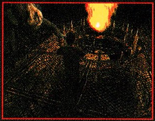
MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BF AND RF


DOWN
UP
LAB EQUIP. ROOM
CHEMISTRY LAB
LIBRARY RESERVE
LIBRARY
CLASS ROOM
CLASS ROOM
CLASS ROOM
CLASS ROOM
x2
MUSIC ROOM
LOCKER ROOM
DOWN

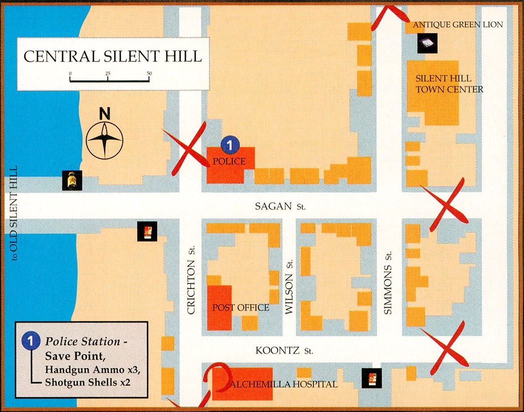
MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2F

SCHOOL BASEMENT BOSS

1 As menacing as this fellow looks, there isn't a great deal to fear about him, except those huge jaws. Stay on the opposite side of the flame and nail him repetitively with the Handgun. After a short while, he will begin to move a little more quickly. If you've read the fairy tale book, you know you need to blast him when he opens his mouth. Equip the Shotgun and let him get close to you. When he opens his jaws, fire off two quick shots to finish him off.



Make those shots count or those jaws will close on you like a steel trap, killing you instantly.


CENTRAL SILENT HILL
0
25
50
N
ANTIQUE GREEN LION
SILENT HILL TOWN CENTER
1
POLICE
to OLD SILENT HILL
SAGAN St.
CRICHTON St.
WILSON St.
SIMMONS St.
POST OFFICE
KOONTZ St.
ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL

1 *Police Station -*
Save Point,
Handgun Ammo x3,
Shotgun Shells x2

SHOPPING DISTRICT

1 Having defeated the boss, you'll find yourself back in the normal school Boiler Room. Grab the K. Gordon Key and head out to the streets. Use the key to enter K. Gordon's house from the alley and make your way to the Balkan Church.

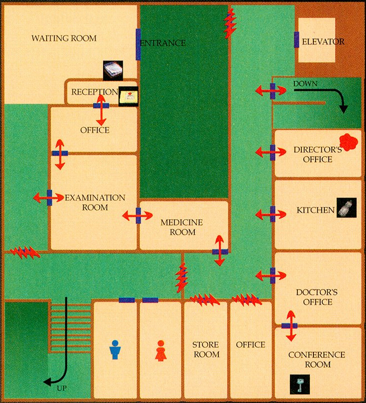
2 Inside the church you will meet Dahlia Gillespie and receive the "Flauros" and the Drawbridge Key. Check around for a Health Drink and a Save Point as well. Now head to the drawbridge control room and use the key to lower the bridge, crossing to the Shopping District.

3 Alchemilla Hospital is your destination in this section of Silent Hill. Check out the Police Station if your ammo supply is running low and then head to the hospital. If you thought the school was strange, man are you in for a shock.

The streets between the bridge and Alchemilla Hospital are crawling with nasty beasts. The creatures to the left will pounce on top of you from a good distance, so watch yourself.

MAP ITEM KEY

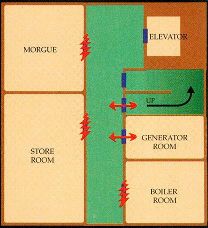
- Basement Key
- Plastic Bottle


WAITING ROOM
ENTRANCE
ELEVATOR
RECEPTION
OFFICE
DOWN
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
EXAMINATION ROOM
MEDICINE ROOM
KITCHEN
DOCTOR'S OFFICE
STORE ROOM
OFFICE
CONFERENCE ROOM
UP

ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL 1F

ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL

1 After meeting Dr. Kaufmann in the Examination Room, go to the Conference Room to get the Basement Key. Use it to go down to the basement and turn on the generator. This will direct power to the elevator. Enter the elevator and check out the second and third floors. Both doors are locked, but you need to stop there anyway. After doing so, a fourth- floor button will appear. Press it and follow the woman through the hallways until you reach the stairs leading back down to the third floor. At this point the rest of the hospital has been transformed into its nightmarish form. Just what on earth is going on around here anyway?


MORGUE
ELEVATOR
UP
GENERATOR ROOM
STORE ROOM
BOILER ROOM

ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL BF

“EVIL” ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL

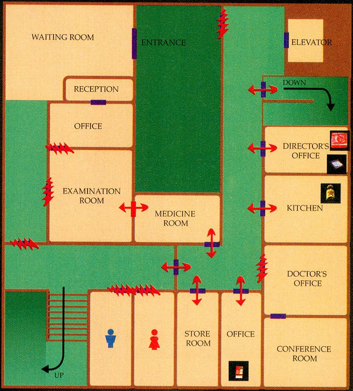
1 Your first task will be to collect four plates required to open the door in the Nurse Center on the second floor. Obtain the Plate of Cat and the Plate of Turtle from the third floor, along with the Blood Pack.

2 Head down to the second floor and go to Room 204 to find the Plate of Hatter. The tentacles that block the plate can be distracted by using the Blood Pack.

3 The final plate is in the Director’s Office on the first floor. Grab the Plate of Queen and head to the Nurse Center. Insert the plates in the following order from the top right: Turtle, Hatter, Cat and Queen. This will unlock the door, allowing you free reign on the rest of the second floor.

4 Get the Basement Storeroom Key from the Operating Room and go to the basement (don’t forget the Lighter). In the Storeroom, push the cabinet to reveal a hidden door. Use the Disinfecting Alcohol on the vine-covered grate, then ignite it with the lighter.

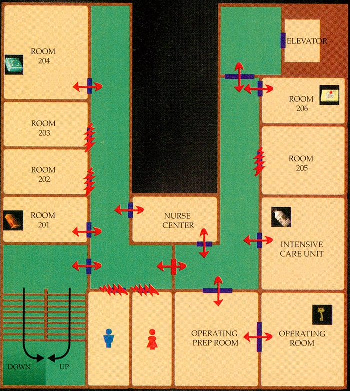
5 This area is crawling with zombified nurses. Head straight for the Examination Room Key and return to the first floor. Use the key and you’ll meet Lisa. After you speak with her, the hospital will return to normal. Grab the Antique Shop Key on the table and leave the hospital.


WAITING ROOM
ENTRANCE
ELEVATOR
RECEPTION
DOWN
OFFICE
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
EXAMINATION ROOM
MEDICINE ROOM
KITCHEN
DOCTOR'S OFFICE
STORE ROOM
OFFICE
CONFERENCE ROOM
UP

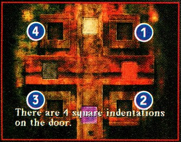
ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL 1F

MAP ITEM KEY

- Disinfecting Alcohol
- Lighter
- Bsmnt. Storeroom Key
- Plate of Hatter
- Plate of Cat
- Plate of Turtle
- Plate of Queen
- Blood Pack


ROOM 204
ELEVATOR
ROOM 206
ROOM 203
ROOM 205
ROOM 202
ROOM 201
NURSE CENTER
INTENSIVE CARE UNIT
OPERATING PREP ROOM
OPERATING ROOM
DOWN
UP

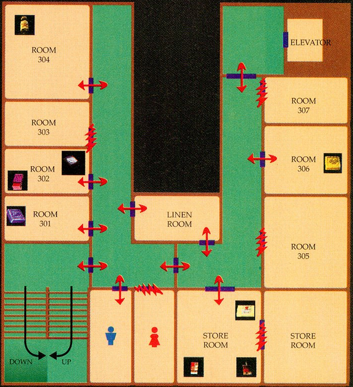
ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL 2F



There are 4 square indentations on the door.

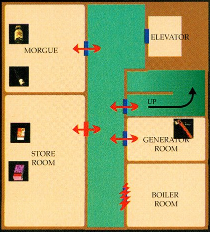
The door to the left is where you must insert the four colored plates:
1 - Plate of Turtle
2 - Plate of Hatter
3 - Plate of Cat
4 - Plate of Queen

Once you have the Basement Storeroom Key you can enter a hidden back room. Use the Disinfecting Alcohol and Lighter to enter the grate.


ROOM 304
ELEVATOR
ROOM 307
ROOM 303
ROOM 302
ROOM 306
ROOM 301
LINEN ROOM
ROOM 305
STORE ROOM
STORE ROOM
DOWN
UP

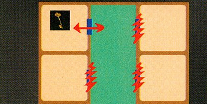
ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL 3F

"EVIL" ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL



ALCHEMILLA HOSPITAL BF

The nursing staff at Alchemilla Hospital despises guests after visiting hours. Be prepared to fend for your life if you're spotted.



HOSPITAL BELOW STORE ROOM

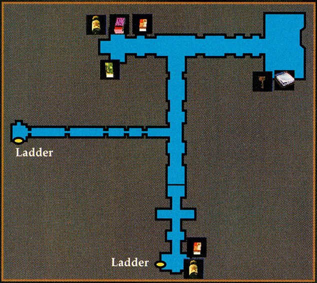
SHOPPING DISTRICT

1 Go to the northeast-most portion of Central Silent Hill to reach the Antique Shop. Push the cabinet inside and you will meet up with Cybil. Go inside the secret passage to check out the altar. When you try to leave you will return to the nightmare world. Exit the Antique Shop and follow the sidewalk to the Silent Hill Town Center, entering through the hole in the door.

2 Go up the escalator and to the left. Investigate the jeweller just before the bench to find two boxes of Hunting Rifle ammo, a First-Aid Kit and a Save Point. Exit the store and continue forward until the floor gives way under you.

3 You are faced with a giant worm of some sort. It will burrow into the ground and then emerge to spit acid your way. There is a Hunting Rifle against the wall that may come in handy during the battle. Stand on the steel grating for safety, forcing the creature to surface next to you. Move back to lure him across the steel, giving you the chance to fill him with holes. Repeat this until you have defeated him. He will slither away, breaking the doors in the process.

4 Your next destination is Alchemilla Hospital. From the back of the Town Center, go straight south and then follow Sagan Street to Crichton. Check the Police Station along the way for some Hunting Rifle and Handgun ammo, as well as a Save Point. After speaking with Lisa, climb to the roof of the Post Office. Once on top of the Post Office, a giant moth will attack you. Where's a bug zapper when you need one? This fella isn't too tough, but watch out for the slime that it will spray at you. Use the Shotgun to make quick work of the beast. Upon its defeat, the town will return to normal.

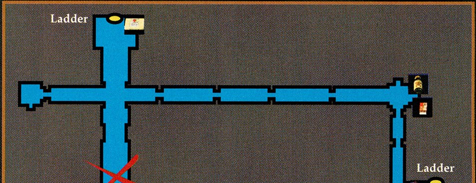


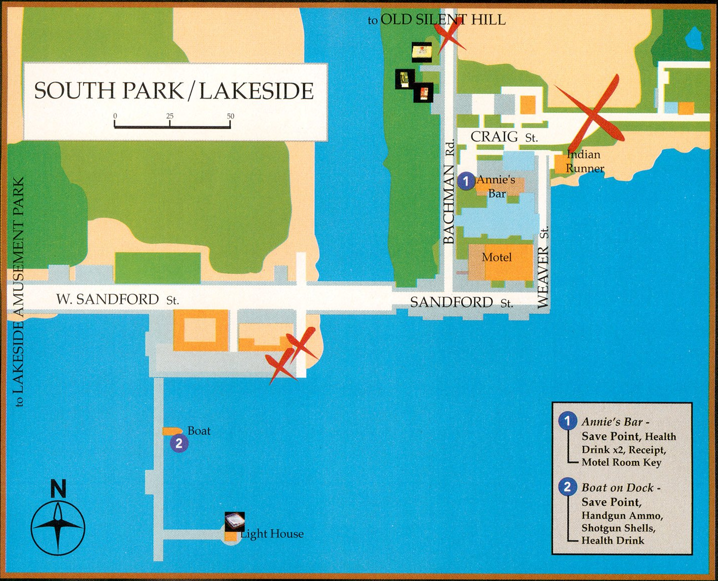
MAP ITEM KEY

- Exam Room Key
- Video tape
- Hammer
- Sewer Key
- Rifle Bullets

Watch out for those slimy lizards lurking about the sewers. Some of them will attack you from above, so keep moving.

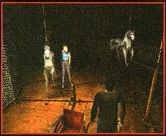
SEWERS TO RESORT AREA




SOUTH PARK / LAKESIDE
0
25
50
to OLD SILENT HILL
CRAIG St.
Indian Runner
BACHMAN Rd.
1 Annie's Bar
WEAVER St.
Motel
W. SANDFORD St.
SANDFORD St.
to LAKESIDE AMUSEMENT PARK
Boat
2
Light House
N
1 Annie's Bar - Save Point, Health Drink x2, Receipt, Motel Room Key
2 Boat on Dock - Save Point, Handgun Ammo, Shotgun Shells, Health Drink

SOUTH PARK/LAKESIDE

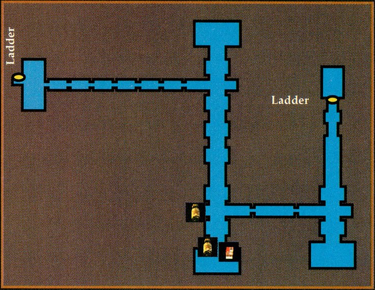
1 Return across the bridge to Old Silent Hill to the Water Treatment Plant. Break the lock off and drop down into the sewer. There are two sections to the sewer, both of which require finding keys to successfully make it through them.



2 You will emerge from the sewer near the lake. As you make your way to the lighthouse, the town will return to nightmare form for a final time. Continue down the dock leading to the lighthouse. Along the way you will enter a boat and meet up with Cybil. Proceed to the lighthouse, following the series of planks and staircases across the dock.

3 After catching a glimpse of Alessa in the lighthouse, you will need to head to the Amusement Park. From the boat, head straight down the dock and turn to the left at the first intersection. There is a gate open on the right side where you'll find the opening to the sewer. Follow the main passageway of the sewer to the ladder leading to the Amusement Park. Look for the carousel to find Cybil. Just before the carousel is a Save Point at a food stand which I recommend using.

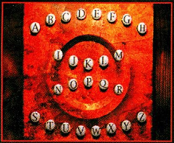
4 Cybil has fallen prey to the evil forces that are at work in Silent Hill and she's out to end your nightmare for good. Preferably, use the Shotgun on her. Take a shot and then quickly move away before she shoots you. Eventually she will drop her gun, leaving you the opening to kill her. Watch out, though, she'll still slap you around and try to grab you. After all of the commotion and a cinema, you'll end up in a surreal place called Nowhere.


Ladder
Ladder

SEWER TO AMUSEMENT PARK

NOWHERE

1 Nowhere is a combination of many of the rooms you have already visited. After entering the elevator, you will find yourself in a hallway from the hospital. There are three doors marked "Phaleg," "Ophiel" and "Hagith." Take the door that leads down to the basement. Go through the classroom and you will find the pliers and a screwdriver. Use the pliers to remove the Key of "Ophiel" which is lodged in the faucet, and enter the door it opens.



The Reaper's Puzzle requires you to enter A, L, E, R, T.

2 Behind the door marked "Ophiel" are two puzzles: the Zodiac and Reaper's List.

Zodiac Puzzle: The room contains three pictures of different astrological signs. The pictures on the walls marked with numbers are clues to solving the puzzle. The numbers you need to enter from the left side of the pillar to the right are: 3, 7, 1. After entering the correct code, the Stone of Time will fall to the ground.

The hands of the clock
...it's a key.

Reaper's List: The second puzzle consists of entering the correct sequence of letters into the keypad to unlock the door. The Grim Reaper's list next to the door has the letters in it. Take the first names in order from young to old, spelling ALERT. Inside is the Amulet of Solomon, the first of five items you need to gather.

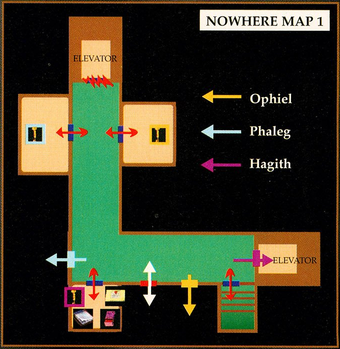
3 Return the room with the clock in it and use the Stone of time to get the Key of "Hagith." Unlock the door and you will be at an elevator. Push 2 and explore the two sets of hallways to find the Ring of Contract, the Crest of Mercury and the Camera.

4 Now take the elevator to the third floor. There are two doors on either side of the room, each with three panels of buttons. Use the Camera on the two pictures next to the altar and the flash will allow you to see which buttons need to be pressed. Get the Bird Cage Key from the room on the left.

5 Return to the bird cage on the first floor and open the cage to get the Key of "Phaleg." Enter the door marked "Phaleg" and get the Key of "Bethor" hidden inside the bag of jelly beans. Use the key and turn the generator off.

6 The last key you need is behind the steel plate on the second floor. Get the Key of "Aratron" and return to the "Phaleg" door. Use the Ring of Contract on the cabinet with the broken chain and then grab the Dagger of Melchior.

7 Enter the door marked "Aratron" and watch the enlighten-

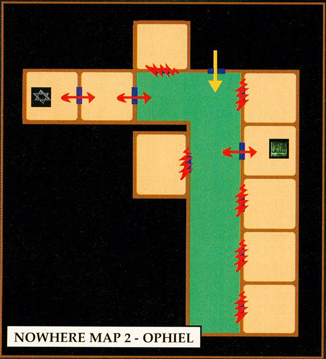


NOWHERE MAP 1

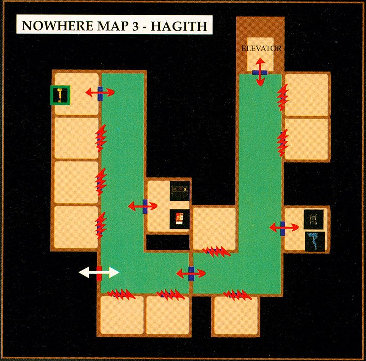
NOWHERE KEYS

- Key of Ophiel
- Key of Hagith
- Key of Phaleg
- Key of Bethor
- Key of Aratron
- Bird Cage Key

*There are five keys in Nowhere. They have been color coded to match the doors they open.

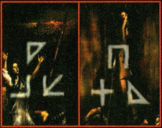


NOWHERE MAP 2 - OPHIEL



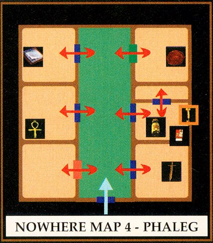
NOWHERE MAP 3 - HAGITH

ing cinema. The final object you need, the Disk of Ouroboros, is inside. Place all the items into the door in the child's room directly across from the one you are in. Saving here is a real good idea.

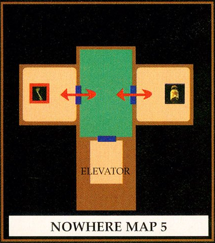


Use the camera to reveal the buttons you need to depress.

8 The final confrontation at last. With a bitter twist of irony, the final boss is actually your daughter. She has been transform into a what Dhalia proclaims is a "god." She will be surrounded by a force field, requiring you to fire at her from a distance. Lightning will begin coursing through her entire body and she will let off a series of blasts at you. Take up position directly behind her, next to the steel cage-like structure. This is the closest you can get to her. Use the Shotgun and the Rifle first, relying on the Handgun as a last resort. As she powers up to attack run around the force field and reposition yourself behind the cage. Repeat this until you have finally defeated her, then watch the fireworks.



NOWHERE MAP 4 - PHALEG



NOWHERE MAP 5

NOWHERE KEY ITEMS

- Amulet of Solomon
- Crest of Mercury
- Stone of Time
- Ring of Contract
- Ankh
- Dagger of Melchior
- Disk of Ouroboros
- Camera

MULTIPLE ENDINGS

There are four different endings that you can get in Silent Hill. Following along with this strategy will get you the "bad ending." Fortunately, both of the key turning points don't occur until well into the game, allowing you to get the better endings without much difficulty. Assuming you've gotten the "bad ending," We'll walk you through the necessary steps to get the other three.

Bad Ending +

- While Alchemilla Hospital is still normal, pick up the Plastic Bottle from the kitchen.
- Go to the Director's Office on the first floor.
- Examine the shattered vial behind the desk.
- Use the Plastic Bottle to collect some of the liquid.
- Continue through the game until you reach the Resort Area.
- When you run into Kaufmann in Annie's Bar, you must not follow up on anything that you find.
- Continue on with the game.
- Fight with Cybil at the Amusement Park until she drops her gun. Let her approach and grab you. Use the liquid in the Plastic Bottle on her while still in her grasp.
- This will save her, thus changing the ending.

Good Ending

- Play through the game until you reach the Lakeside Resort Area.
- Go to Annie's Bar.
- After meeting Kaufmann, search the area around the pool tables to find his wallet with a Receipt and Motel Room Key inside.
- The Receipt has a combination written on it. Head to the Indian Runner and enter 0, 4, 7, 3 on the lock to the back door.
- Search the store walls to find a note with a shopping list and the code for the side door at the motel.
- Unlock the side door of the motel by entering 0, 8, 8, 6 into the keypad.
- Get the Magnet off the desk and go to the front office.
- Unlock the door and head out to room no. 3.
- Use the Motel Room Key to open the door.
- Push the dresser and use the Magnet to obtain the Motorcycle Key from the crack.
- Go back to the motel office and enter the garage.
- Use the Motorcycle Key on the motorcycle (don't miss the Health Drink and Shotgun Shells).
- Kill Cybil when you reach the Amusement Park.
- Finish the game.

Good Ending +

- While Alchemilla Hospital is still normal, pick up the Plastic Bottle from the kitchen.
- Go to the Director's Office on the first floor and use the Plastic Bottle on the shattered vial.
- Go to Annie's Bar and meet Kaufmann. Search the area around the pool tables to find his wallet with a Receipt and Motel Room Key inside.
- Head to the Indian Runner and enter the combination (0,4,7,3) on the lock to the back door. Search the walls for the note with the motel keypad code on it.
- Unlock the side door of the motel by entering 0, 8, 8, 6 into the keypad.
- Get the Magnet off the desk and go to the front office.
- Unlock the door and head out to room no. 3. Use the Motel Room Key to open the door.
- Push the dresser and use the Magnet to obtain the Motorcycle Key from the crack.
- Go back to the motel office and enter the garage. Use the Motorcycle Key and meet with Kaufmann.
- Continue the game until you fight Cybil. Shoot her until she drops her gun and let her grab you.
- Use the Plastic Bottle on her.
- Finish the game.

HIDDEN WEAPONS

CUT-RITE CHAINSAWS

There is a Chain saw.

There is a great deal of fun to be had with this bad boy...

- There are several hidden weapons you can receive, depending on the ending you get. Get either of the Bad Endings and you will get the Gasoline Can, which will appear inside the gas station in Old Silent Hill. This will allow you to use the Chain Saw (found at Cut-Rite Chainsaws, of course) and Rock Drill (found on the ground level of the drawbridge tower).
- Beat the game with the Good Ending and you will get the Katana. The Katana is found in the doghouse on Levin Street in Old Silent Hill. When you enter the house, it's behind the first door on the right.
- Completing the game with the Good Ending+ will activate the Channeling Stone. Experiment!
- Get either of the Good Endings and you will face a different end boss. This creature will move around and the lightning it shoots is unavoidable.

Archive Tricks

Apocalypse

Lots of Cheats:

Here are some awesome cheats on Apocalypse:

AREA SELECT
Pause the game, hold L1 and press Square, Circle, X.

INFINITE LIVES
Pause the game, hold L1 and press Triangle, Circle, X, Square.

FILL HEALTH Pause the game, hold L1 and press X, Triangle, Circle.

SKIP CHECK POINTS
Pause the game, hold L1 and press Triangle, Square, Circle, X.

Asteroids

Cool Codes

On the Title Screen when "Press Start" is flashing, press and hold the Select button and press the following buttons in this order for the results as shown:

Unlock Classic Asteroids - Circle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Square, Circle
Unlock the Fourth Ship - Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Square
Level Select - Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle. Once you are in a game, you can change levels and zones and turn the collision off by simultaneously pressing Select+Start. Then choose the option you want and press L1 to activate that cheat.

Classic Asteroids Codes

The following codes will work once you pause in the middle of the classic Asteroids game.

Add One Life - Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle, Square, X, Triangle
99 Lives - Up, X, Down, Triangle, Left, Square, Right, Circle
Invincibility - Down, Down, Up, Up, Circle, Square, Triangle, Triangle

Bust A Groove

Dance Preview:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty setting with any character and you'll open the Dance View on the Main Menu Screen. You will be able to view dance moves, mess with camera angles, etc. with any of the characters who completed the game. Make sure you save!

Alternate Costumes:
Highlight a character from the Player Select Screen and hold the Select button. With Select held, press X. You'll get that character's alternate costume.

Play as Capoeira:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with any character. Now you can choose Capoeira.

Play as Robo-Z:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with any character after you acquire Capoeira.

Play as Burger Dog:
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level

WCW/nWo Thunder

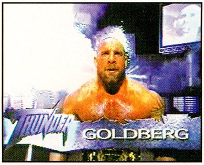
Many Cool Codes

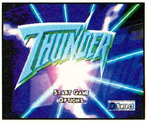
All Wrestlers:
At the Title Screen, press R1(4), L1(4), R2(4), L2(4), Select to unlock all 128 wrestlers.

Big Heads:
At the Title Screen, press R1(7), R2, Select.

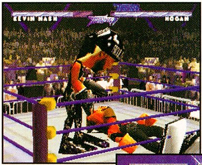
Big Head, Hands, Feet and Weapons:
At the Title Screen, press R2(7), R1, Select.

Might Meter:
At the Title Screen, press L2(4), R2(4), L1(4), R1(4), Select. The offensive and defensive attributes of each wrestler may now be adjusted.





Enter the All Wrestler code from the Title Screen to select from all 128 wrestlers.



PLAYER 1
SELECT OPPONENT
LET'S GET DIGITAL
SHORT CIRCUIT

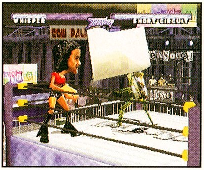
Get into a crazy match with huge headed wrestlers.

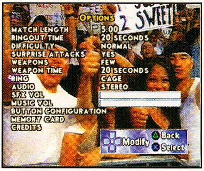
View FMV Sequences:
At the Options Menu, press R1(4), L1(4), Select. Press Left+X to advance through the sequences, Right+X to move back, or Start(2) to exit.

Cage Ring in Any Type of Match:
Enter the Options Menu, highlight the "Random" ring selection, then press R1, R2, R1, R2, Select. If you entered the code correctly, the word "Cage" will be spoken. Since The Cage ring is not enabled with the "Ring select" code, this is the only way to obtain it.

Ring Select:
At the Options Menu, press R1, R2, R1, R2, Select. Now every time Select is pressed, the current ring will advance by one. To move in reverse, press L1, L2, L1, L2 followed by Select.

Dancing Wrestlers:
Enable the "Ring Select" code, then choose the USO ring to have dancing wrestlers. Press L1 to pan to the other side of the ring (except for Battle Royal) or L2 for a small dance move.




OPTIONS
MATCH LENGTH 5:00
RINGOUT TIME 20 SECONDS
DIFFICULTY NORMAL
SURPRISE ATTACKS YES
WEAPONS FEW
WEAPON TIME 20 SECONDS
RING CAGE
AUDIO STEREO
SFX VOL
MUSIC VOL
BUTTON CONFIGURATION
MEMORY CARD
CREDITS
Modify Back Select

Do you have a trick that you, and only you, know? Don't hold back—write us at:

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

Sorry, we cannot respond to individual letters asking for codes or tricks.

Knockout Kings

Multiple Codes

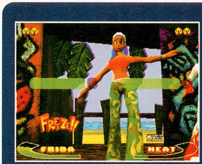
These codes are a bit tricky to enter. You must be very accurate to make them work. Make sure you hear a bell sound each time you enter a command (for the bear and big head code). If you don't hear a bell, start the trick over again from the beginning. Once you enter the code correctly, you'll hear a "whoosh" sound.

Box as a Bear:
At the Main Menu, press Right+Square, Right+Triangle, Right+Circle, Right+X. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. Then select any boxer to play as a bear.

Big Head Mode:
At the Main Menu, press Left+Circle, Left+Triangle, Left+Square, Left+X. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

Regain Energy:
When given a choice to hit the heavy or speed bag between fights, hold L1+L2+R1+R2 to regain two to eight points of energy, depending on how long the buttons are held.

EA SPORTS
TRAINING
HEAVY BAG
INCREASES POWER AND STAMINA.
KNOCKOUT KINGS



Bust A Groove

Secret Moves

Perform these moves **in order** during your dancer's "solo" to score big points.

HEAT:
Up, Down, Up, Circle
Down, Up, Down, X
Right, Left, Right, Circle
Down, Up, Down, Circle

FRIDA:
Up, Down, Up, Circle
Right, Left, Right, X
Down, Left, Up, Circle
Up, Right, Down, X

STRIKE SIM:
Up, Up, Left, Circle
Left, Left, Right, Circle
Right, Left, Left, Up, Circle
Left, Up, Down, Right, X

HAMM & BURGER DOG:
Down, Right, Up, Circle
Up, Left, Down, X
Up, Right, Up, Circle
Down, Left, Down, Circle

KELLY:
Right, Left, Right, Circle
Right, Left, Left, Circle
Left, Right, Left, X
Left, Up, Right, Circle

SHORTY & COLUMBO:
Down, Down, Down, Circle
Left, Right, Up, X
Up, Up, Down, X
Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle

HIRO:
Right, Up, Down, Circle
Up, Left, Right, X
Left, Left, Down, Circle
Right, Right, Up, X

PINKY:
Up, Left, Up, Circle
Right, Left, Down, Circle
Up, Down, Right, X
Left, Right, Down, X

GAS-O:
Left, Down, Right, Up, Circle
Up, Left, Down, Right, X
Right, Down, Left, Up, X
Down, Right, Up, Left, Circle

KITTY-N:
Down, Down, Right, Circle
Up, Right, Right, Up, X
Right, Up, Left, Down, X
Left, Right, Up, Left, Down, Circle

CAPOEIRA:
Right, Up, Right, X
Left, Down, Left, Up, X
Right, Up, Right, Left, Circle
Down, Up, Left, Down, Circle

ROBO-Z:
Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle
Up, Left, Down, Right, X
Down, Up, Down, Up, Circle
Down, Down, Right, Left, Left, Circle

with Hamm after acquiring Robo-Z.

Play as Columbo (the mouse):
Finish the game under the Normal difficulty setting with Shorty after acquiring Robo-Z.

Colony Wars: Vengeance

Password Cheats

Here are some password cheats for CW:V (all are case-sensitive):

Invincibility: Vampire
All weapons: Tornado
Primary weapons available: Dark Angel
Infinite secondary weapons: Chimera
Infinite afterburners: Avalanche
Infinite money: Hydra
All ships: Thunderchild
FMV and mission select: Demon
All missions, all ships, infinite secondary weapons, etc.: Blizzard
Disable Cheats: Stormlord

Cool Boarders 3

Cheat Names

Enter each cheat below as a name in Tournament Mode to get the various results.

WONITALL - Access to every course
OPEN_EM - Access every boarder and board
BIGHEADS - Get huge heads

DarkStalkers 3

Secret Characters

Play as Male Shadow
At the Character Selection Screen, highlight the "?" box, press Select five times, then press any button.

Play as Female (Marionette) Shadow
At the Character Selection Screen, highlight the "?" box, press Select seven times, then press any button.

Play as Image Talbain
At the Character Selection Screen, highlight Gallon, hold Select, then press all three Punch or Kick buttons.

Play as Oboro (Shin Bishamon)
At the Character Selection Screen, highlight Bishamon, hold Select, then press any button.

Duke Nukem: Time to Kill

Appearance and Cheat Codes

Big Heads, Little Heads:
To change Duke and the enemies' appearances, pause the game and enter one of these codes:

Big Head Duke - R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1 R1, R1, R1, Up
Tiny Head Duke - R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, Down
Big Head Enemies - R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, Left

Note: If you have Big Head Duke and want it to be Tiny Head, then just enter the Big Head code again. Duke's head will shrink back to normal and you can put in the Tiny Head code. Otherwise it won't work. Do the same for Tiny to Big.

Archive Tricks

Cheat Codes
Pause the game and enter these codes at a slow but even pace. If you enter them too fast they might not work.

Infinite Ammo - Left, Right, Left, Right, Select, Left, Right, Left, Right, Select
All Weapons - L1, L2, Up, L1, L2, Down, R1, Right, R2, Left
All Inventory - R1 (5 times), L2 (5 times)
All Keys - Up, Right, Up, Left, Down, Up, Right, Left, Right, Down
Invisible - L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1
Double Damage - L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2
Temporary Invulnerability - R1, L2, L1, L2, R1, L1, R1, L2, L1, L2
Super Weapons - Right, Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Select

Level Select
While playing, pause the game and press Down nine times and then press Up and it should say "Level Select." Now quit the game and on the Main Menu you will see a new option that says "Time To Kill." Select it and press Right or Left to choose the level you want to go to. Press X to start playing.

International Superstar Soccer Pro '98

Play as the Classic All Stars
In the Select Menu, highlight Exhibition and press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, Circle, X. Applause will be heard if you did it correctly. At the Exhibition Menu, choose any mode of play. When you're at the Select Country Mode, press and hold L1+R1, and you will be able to choose Classic All Stars!

Nectaris: Military Madness

Passwords
Here are the New Story codes for the game:

1. RANDAL
2. HUNDRA
3. CINBER
4. MARLIN
5. BAYARD
6. WEBLEY
7. PARKER
8. MERKEL
9. ITHACA
10. BAIKAL
11. SAVAGE
12. VALMET
13. MAUSER
14. KIMBER
15. BISLEY
16. MEANEC
17. LADNAR
18. ARDNUH
19. REBNIC
20. NILRAM
21. DRAYAB
22. YELBEW
23. REKRAP
24. LEKREM
25. ACAHTI
26. LAKIAB
27. EGAVAS
28. TEMLAV
29. RESUAM
30. REBMIK
31. YELSIB
32. CENAEM

NFL Blitz

Blitz Cheats
These codes worked on the arcade, and now they

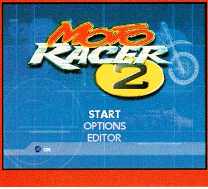
Moto Racer 2

Cool Cycle Codes

Faster Bikes:
Press Up(3), Right, Left, Triangle, X at the Main Menu.

Higher Jumps:
Press Left(2), Up(2), Right(2), Down(2), Square, Triangle, X at the Main Menu.

Other Racers Limited to 50 km/h:
Press Circle, Square, Right, Left, L1, R1, X at the Main Menu.



Take your races to the extreme with faster bikes and higher jumps.

Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter

(Note: This trick works on a preproduction version of the game and is subject to change)

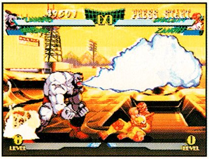
Hidden Characters
These characters can be used in any mode of the game.

For Armored Spider-Man:
Highlight Spider-Man, hold Select and press any button.

For Dark Sakura:
Highlight Hulk, hold Select and press any button.

For Mephisto:
Highlight Omega Red, hold Select and press any button.

PRESS START
MEPHISTO
RYU



For Shadow:
Highlight Dhalsim, hold Select and press any button.

For Dark Zangief:
Highlight Blackheart, hold Select and press any button.

For U.S. Agent:
Highlight M.Bison, hold Select and press any button.

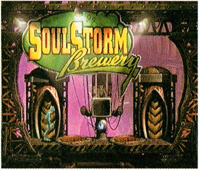
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

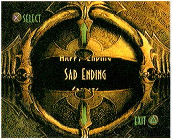
Cool Codes

Level Select:
At the main menu hold R1, then press down, up, left, right, triangle, square, circle, triangle, square, circle, down, up, left, right.

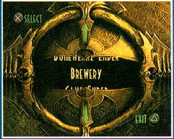
View all FMVs:
At the main menu hold R1, then press up, down, left, right, square, circle, triangle, circle, square, circle, up, down, left, right.

Invincibility:
While playing a game, hold R1, then press circle, triangle, square, X, down, down, down, circle, triangle, square, X.





Invincibility will ensure that Abe will regain his freedom.



BUST-A-MOVE 4
PUSH START BUTTON
TAITO
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Bust-A-Move 4

Another World

You'll get an entirely new set of levels when you enter this code. At the Title Screen, press Triangle, Left, Right, Left, Triangle. You will hear a sound and see a little green spinning icon in the lower right corner of the screen to confirm that it worked. From the Game Menu, choose Puzzle and then pick Arcade. Choose your difficulty level and then you'll be able to play a plethora of new stages!

ROUND
TO START
GAME MENU
PUZZLE
ARCADE
STORY
EXPLANATION OF THE PULLEY

also work for the PlayStation version! Enter the following codes during the Vs. Screen. Some codes may not work in one-player games and some two-player codes may require both players to enter the code.
For No CPU Assist press: Jump (1x), Pass (2x) and pad Down. (Note: Only works in Two-player Mode.)
To Show More Field press: Jump (2x), Pass (1x) and pad Right.
For Fog On press: Jump (3x) and pad Down.
For Fast Turbo Running press: Jump (3x), Pass (2x) and pad Left.
For Huge Head press: Jump (4x) and pad Up.
For Thick Fog press: Jump (4x), Pass (1x) and pad Down.
For Super Blitzing press: Jump (4x), Pass (5x) and pad Up.
For Big Ball press: Jump (5x) and pad Right.
To Hide Receiver Name press: Turbo (1x), Pass (2x) and pad Right.
For Tournament Mode press: Turbo (1x), Jump (1x), Pass (1x) and pad Down.
For Random Play Choice press: Turbo (1x), Jump (1x), Pass (5x) and pad Left.
For Super Field Goals press: Turbo (1x), Jump (2x), Pass (3x) and pad Left.
For Big Players press: Turbo (1x), Jump (4x), Pass (1x) and pad Right.

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

Next Section Warp

During the game, hold the R1 button and press Circle, Circle, X, X, Square, Square. This cheat will take you to the next section of the game, and you can use the cheat as often as you like to get past difficult areas of the game. Be warned: Skipping sections of the game will decrease the number of saved Mudokons in the game!

R-Types

Game Cheats

Level Select:
Highlight either the "R-Type" or "R-Type II" options at the Title Screen. Quickly press L2(10), R2(10). Begin gameplay and press Start to access the Stage Select and FMV sequences within the Menu options. Choose your stage and then press X to begin.
Slow Down Ship:
Pause game, hold L2 and press Right, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, Down, Left, X.
Speed Up Ship:
Pause game, hold L2 and press Right, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, Down, Left, Circle.

Rogue Trip

Cheat Codes

To make any of these cheats work, you must first enter the Enable Cheats code while in the middle of a game. Then put in one of the other codes as shown:
Enable Cheats:
Press L1+R1+R2+Select at same time when you first start the level.

Archive Tricks

Invulnerable:
Press L1+R1 at same time, then press Up, Down, Left, Right

Hornet's Nest:
While stingers are selected, press Triangle+L2+L1+R1+Left. Hold these buttons until you see the text confirmation that it worked.

Blow Up Earth:
Lay an upgraded lob bomb in the back corner within 100 feet of the UFO wreck. Transport up to the moon, then detonate the bomb. Debris from Earth will pummel the moon. Eventually you'll be in weightlessness. It ruins the game, but it's fun!

S.C.A.R.S.

Cups, Cars and Modes

On the Title Screen, press Start. On the Player Select Screen, choose your number of players. On the Game Select Screen, highlight and choose the Options. On the Options Screen, choose Settings. Now move down and highlight the "Password" option and enter one of the codes as shown for various results:

GLASSX - Activates the Crystal Cup
ROCKYY - Activates the Diamond Cup
ZDPEAK - Activates the Zenith Cup
XPERTS - Activates the Challenge Mode
DESERT - Activates the Scorpion Car
RATTLE - Activates the Cobra Car
RUNNER - Activates the Cheetah Car
MYSTER - Activates the Panther Car
ALLVID - Activates the Codes

Tenchu: Stealth Assassins

Debug Menu

While playing the game, press the Start button. While the game is paused, hold L1+R2 and press Up, Triangle, Down, X, Left, Square, Right, Circle. Release L1 and R2, and then press L1, R1, L2, and R2. Now press Start and immediately press L2+R2 at the same time. If you do this correctly, a blue screen will appear and many options will be available like stage select, charged items, enemy layout, etc.

Tomb Raider III

Incredible Cheats

In the middle of the game without pausing, enter any of these cheats as shown:

All Weapons: L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2. You will hear a scream.

Fill Energy: R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2. You will hear her grunt.

Level Skip: L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2. Lara says "No."

Rogue Trip

PLAYER 1
D-PAD C
RANDOM

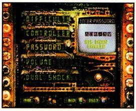
CHEATS ENABLED
TOURIST
SPECIAL 2

Infinite Weapons, Unlimited Jump and Play as Big Daddy

First, you must enable the Cheat Mode. Press and hold L1+R1+R2+Select in the middle of a game. Now enter this code after you have enabled the Cheat Mode (Don't pause the game):

Infinite Weapons:
Press and hold L1+R1, then press Up, Down, Up, R2

Enter these codes as a Password under the Options Menu:



Unlimited Jump:
Press Circle, Square, R2, X, Triangle, R2

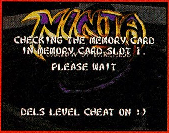
Play as Big Daddy:
Press Triangle, Square, R2, X, Triangle, R2. Then pick challenge mode and choose "Nuke York" as your level. Big daddy will appear on the Character Select screen.

Ninja: Shadow of Darkness

Invincibility and Level Select

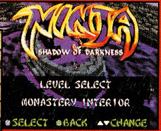
Invincibility
Pause the game at any time and press L2, R2, L2 3 times, R2 3 times, then Circle, Triangle, Square, Circle, Triangle and Square. Listen for a chime to verify that you entered the code correctly. When you unpause, you'll now be a skeleton with infinite lives, energy, smoke bombs, magic potions and full scroll power! To revert back to a ninja, simply pause and re-enter the code. However, when you do, you'll get to keep all of the maxed-out items you got when you were the skeleton!

Level Select
Remove your memory card and turn on the PlayStation. When the screen says "Checking Memory Card" quickly press L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2. The words "DELS LEVEL CHEAT ON" will briefly appear. Start a new game and you'll access the Level Select menu.



CHECKING THE MEMORY CARD
IN MEMORY CARD SLOT 1.
PLEASE WAIT

DELS LEVEL CHEAT ON :)

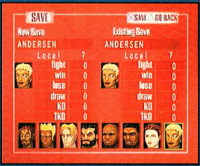


Who needs stealth to get around? Put in the Level Select code to skip to anyplace you want to go.

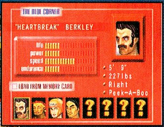
Contender

Main Event Characters in Two-Player Mode

Start a new boxer in the Main Event. Pick one of the boxers and immediately save him to your memory card. Exit, then repeat with another character. When you have saved each boxer start a two-player match. At the character select screen press Square to pick one of the other boxers from your memory card.


SAVE ✕SAVE △GO BACK

New Save		Existing Save	
ANDERSEN		ANDERSEN	
Local	7	Local	7
fight	0	fight	0
win	0	win	0
lose	0	lose	0
draw	0	draw	0
KO	0	KO	0
TKO	0	TKO	0

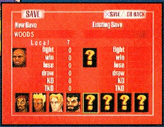

THE BLUE CORNER

"HEARTBREAK" BERKLEY

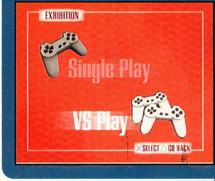
life
power
speed
endurance

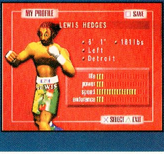
- 5' 9"
- 227lbs
- Right
- Peek-A-Boo

☐ LOAD FROM MEMORY CARD


SAVE ✕SAVE △GO BACK

New Save		Existing Save
WOODS		
Local	7	
fight	0	fight
win	0	win
lose	0	lose
draw	0	draw
KO	0	KO
TKO	0	TKO



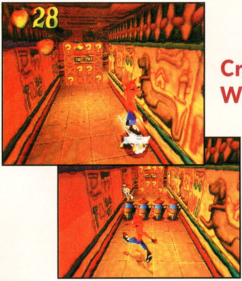

MY PROFILE ☐ SAVE

LEWIS HEDGES

- 6' 1"
- 181lbs
- Left
- Detroit

life
power
speed
endurance

✕SELECT △EXIT



Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

Free Apples

When you are playing a level that has the rock-throwing monkeys, after you have destroyed the vases that they occupy you can jump on the monkeys and get free apples.

Those pesky monkeys can be jumped on to give Crash a handful of free apples.

All Secrets (access All Hallows): L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Lara will sigh.

Get Race Key at Laura's House: R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Laura says, "No."

Twisted Metal III

Sweet Tricks

Infinite Specials:

Enter L1, L1, R1, R1, R1 as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now begin a game and quit. When you begin a game again, you will have an unlimited amount of your character's special weapon.

Play as Minion:

Enter Right, Right, Right, Left, Left as your password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. You can now select Minion at the Vehicle Selection Screen.

Play as Sweet Tooth:

Enter Left, Left, Left, Right, Right as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. You can now select Sweet Tooth at the Vehicle Selection Screen.

Club Kid's House Level:

Enter Left, Left, Left, Square, Square as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at the Club Kid's House bonus level.

Warehouse Level:

Enter Square, Square, Square, Left, Left as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle in order to begin at the Warehouse bonus level.

Demo Level:

Enter Up, Up, Up, Left, Left as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at the Demo level shown in the background at the Main Menu.

Enable memory card:

Enter Start, Start, Start, Start, Start as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now configure your settings and begin a game. Before the game begins, you will be prompted to save.

The Unholy War

Secret Characters, Battlefields and Maps

There are only three cheats in the Unholy War, all of which use the same code, though in different places.

The code is as follows:

Press the Circle button and the Square button simultaneously. Press the Select button four times. Press the Start button three times. Press the Square button two times. Press the Circle button once. Press the Circle button and the Square button simultaneously again.

To unlock Secret Characters, highlight "Set Teams" on the Mayhem Selection Screen and perform the code.

To unlock Secret Battlefields, highlight "Accept Teams" on the Mayhem Selection screen and perform the code.

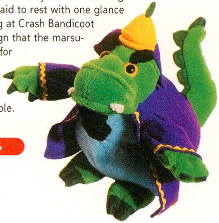
To unlock all one-player Strategy Maps, highlight "Set War" on the Strategy Selection Screen and perform the code.

⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙ 5G No question, this should be in your home
⚙⚙⚙⚙ 4G Recommended, very cool
⚙⚙⚙ 3G Pretty good, check it out
⚙⚙ 2G Below average
⚙ 1G Very lame

Cuddle With Crash

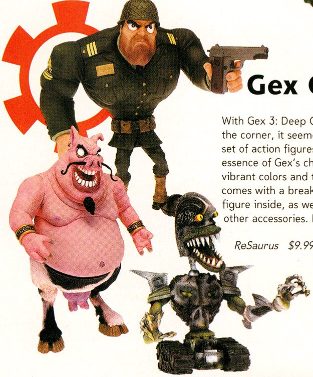
If you're still questioning whether the PlayStation has a legitimate mascot, all doubts will be laid to rest with one glance at these toys. Yep, you're looking at Crash Bandicoot Plush Bean Bag dolls, surely a sign that the marsupial has arrived as a spokesman for PlayStation gaming. Some might suggest these will be future collectables; we just say they're cute, cuddly and affordable.

ReSaurus *$4.99* ⚙⚙⚙⚙



STAR WARS EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE

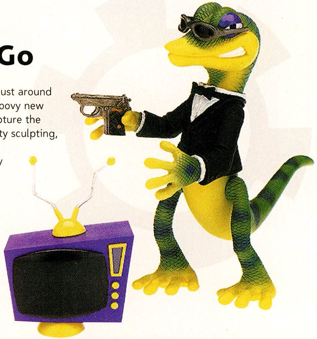
We paid a visit to the annual Toy Fair trade show in New York this past February and were more than excited to see several manufacturers flaunting the *Phantom Menace* logo in their showrooms. But when *OPM*'s roving reporter tried to view the toys, he was quickly rebuffed. "There are LucasArts people everywhere," quivered one nervous product manager. "I can't show these to the press." Sheesh. Still, we did scrounge up a few tidbits. First, Hasbro will release a line of figures packed with digital audio chips that will allow them to communicate with each other and utter lines from the movie. Next, OddzOn will release Koosh toys based on some of the new Star Wars creatures. Another company called Illuminations has a top-secret line of glow-in-the-dark *Phantom Menace* stickers. Finally, we learned that the novelization of *Phantom Menace* will be written by none other than Terry Brooks, legendary fantasy author and creator of the Shannara saga. Awesome!



Gex On The Go

With Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko's release just around the corner, it seemed about time for a groovy new set of action figures. These toys really capture the essence of Gex's character, with some nifty sculpting, vibrant colors and tons of attitude. Each comes with a break-away TV set with a fly figure inside, as well as an assortment of other accessories. Look for them in June.

ReSaurus *$9.99* ⚙⚙⚙⚙◐



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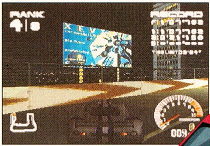
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4

Players	**1**	**Developer**	**Namco**
Availability	**TBA**	**Publisher**	**Namco**
Analog Compatible	**Yes**	**Genre**	**Racing**

✕	**Accelerate**
○	**Not used**
□	**Brake**
△	**Change view**
L1	**Not used**
L2	**Not used**
R1	**Not used**
R2	**Not used**

What is it?

The fourth installment in the insanely popular Ridge Racer series of arcade-style racing games from Namco. The demo lets you play one car on one course for three laps or five minutes, whichever happens first. Whew, that's a lot of numbers. We also noticed the demo supports the analog controller, which the import version does not. A quick call to Namco revealed analog support has indeed been added for the final U.S. version. Yes!



What to expect in the full game:

You ready for some more numbers? Eight different tracks in total (four courses with two variants each); a split-screen two-player mode and single-player Gran Prix contest; 320 cars (if only 45 unique body frames); a time attack section; a body shop to paint your own textures for your cars; and PocketStation support to let you trade cars you've earned with friends.

Our advice:

The car you control in the demo is an automatic and is one of the slower cars in the game, which makes it great to learn with. Try to master the powerslide (see sidebar) and don't forget to use your opponents to your advantage; keep an eye on the rear-view mirror and swerve to block them if they try to pass.

Did you try:

To beat our *OPM* record low lap time of

1' 03'' 875

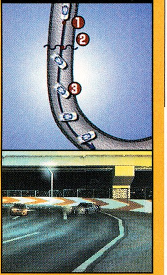
PRC
PAC RACING CLUB
20th Anniversary
namco
PAC-MAN
76

Each racing team in R4 is named in homage to a famous Namco game of the past.

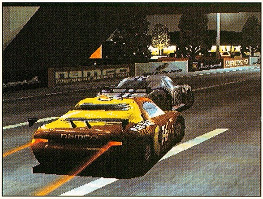
OPM psychic sez:

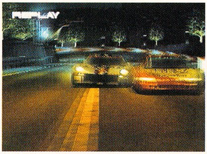
"Fun as hell, isn't it? But still no U.S. release date—ask again later."

Powersliding for Dummies



As you approach a curve, turn into it early (1) and quickly let off the accelerator (and/or just barely tap the brake) to start your slide (2). Let your car rotate until it is aligned with the road coming out of the curve, then slam right back on the accelerator (3). You'll want to vary the formula depending on the car and the turn, so experiment and find what works best!



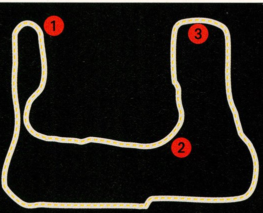


Replay Blur:

Tap the Triangle button in Replay Mode to toggle a special motion-blur effect. Remind anyone of a similar effect in Metal Gear Solid's cinemas?

And now for the main course

Knowing the track is one of the most important keys to success in racing, so allow us to introduce the demo course, "The Edge of the Earth." You may be tempted to powerslide at every major turn, but only curves ① and ③ require it. Turn ② may seem like it needs a slide, but if you take it at the correct angle you can make it through even at top speed.



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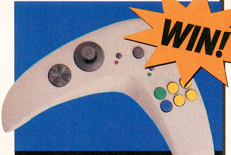
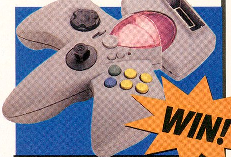


BOOMERANG 64

REALITYVEST FOR PS



X-WIRE WIRELESS FOR N64

TRIVIA CONTEST RULES: 1. Entry. To enter, correctly answer six consecutive trivia questions and leave your name, address and phone number as instructed. Winners will be determined by judges whose decisions are final. One winner per household per month. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for unintelligible, incomplete or misdirected responses. 2. Prizes: Winners will receive one (1) of the following at Ziff-Davis' sole discretion: Remote Wizard, Boomerang64, Reality Vest, X-Wire Wireless Controller. Prizes have an approximate retail value of at least $25.00. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff-Davis should the featured prize(s) become unavailable. 3. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Maryland. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall return a signed affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. Employees of ZD Inc., NUBY HOLDINGS CORPORATION and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither ZD Inc., NUBY, nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes or expenses resulting from this contest. Winners acknowledge that ZD Inc. has neither made nor is in any manner responsible or liable for any warranty or guarantee, whether express or implied, in fact or in law, relative to any prize including but not limited to its quality, mechanical condition or fitness. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that ZD Inc., its agents, representatives and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prizes. 4. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Preview Line Trivia Contest," P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. 5. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

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WCW/nWo Thunder

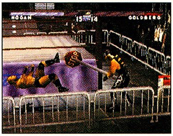
Players	1	**Developer**	Inland Prod.
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	THQ
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Action

✕	**Kick**
○	**Action/Grapple/Pin**
□	**Punch**
△	**Chop**
L1	**Quick Block**
L2	**Taunt**
R1	**Dodge**
R2	**Not used**

↓○○	**Swing weapon**
□○	**Throw weapon**
→△	**Drop weapon**
→○	**Choke**
↓○○	**Grapple**
○○	**Piledriver**
→△	**Vertical suplex**
→○	**Throw to ropes**

What is it?

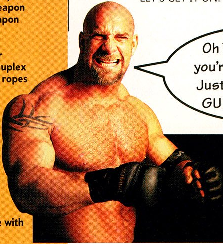
Rasslin'—big, bold 'n' brassy. Two of the most popular leagues combine into one big, sweaty, muscular, smack-talkin', Slim-Jim chompin', off-the-top-rope jumpin' explosion of a game. You can only play the one-player game in the demo against a computer opponent (as either Goldberg or Hogan), but you get your choice of a regular exhibition or a cage match. So get ready, step into the squared circle and "LET'S GET IT ON!"



What to expect in the full game:

A *lot* more wrestlers (almost 130 in all), with everyone from Ric Flair to the Guerrilla (and that's not some guy's stage name, we're talkin' about the actual leaf-eating kind here). Also a whole slew of different fighting modes, like Tag Team, Battle Royal and more.

OPM psychic sez: "Well this one's already in stores and selling like crazy, but if you ask me the gameplay feels like someone has it caught in a sleeper hold."


Oh YEAH, Hogan, you're going DOWN! Just look at these GUNS! OH YEAH!

Man, I'm getting too old for this sh—oooh! I think I pulled something!

Special Moves

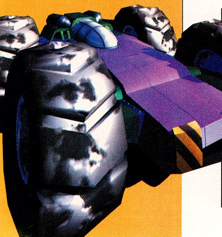
Goldberg		**Hollywood Hogan**	
↑△○○	Spear	✕○○	Knee bashes
△○○	Gorilla Press	△△△	Big boot
↓△△△	Jackhammer	↓□□✕	Hogan legdrop

Did you try:
Pounding the stuffing out of the computer with any of the objects outside the ring? There's nothing more satisfying than tomahawking someone with a stop sign.

Rollcage

Players	1-2	**Developer**	ATD
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Psygnosis
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Racing

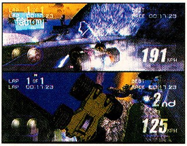
✕	**Accelerate**
○	**Face Forward**
□	**Brake**
△	**Reverse**
L1	**Fire Weapon**
L2	**Zoom View in**
R1	**Fire Weapon**
R2	**Zoom View Out**



What is it?

Psygnosis' new take on the racing game of the future. No, not hovercrafts again, but cars that hug the road so tight they can literally drive right up a wall and on the ceiling. Don't worry about flipping over, either—you can just keep on truckin'.

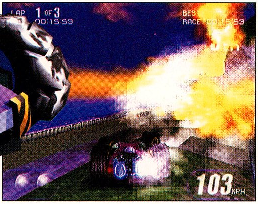
Our advice: You have two characters to choose from in the demo; try Jet until you get used to the controls and the way the game works, then switch to Lenny for his higher top speed. Also, keep an eye out for weapons and speed boost markers on the tracks; both can mean the difference between winning or losing.



Did you try:

The split-screen two-player mode? That's right, it's included in the demo, so check it out (just make sure you have a second controller plugged in when you start the demo). You can also change the screen split from horizontal to vertical under the options if you prefer.

OPM psychic sez: "What the hell are you asking me for? Go read the review on page 85, you lazy punk!"



You can destroy all sorts of scenery in Rollcage—everything from bushes and trees to those tall buildings that line the track. Try ramming them and find out for yourself.

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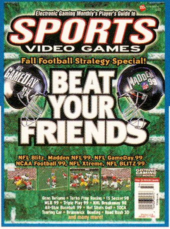
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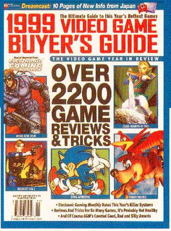
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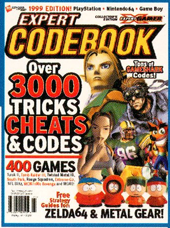
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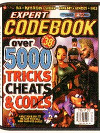
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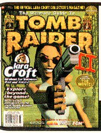
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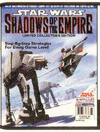
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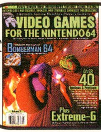
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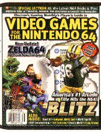
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Demo Disc

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a playable demo is worth a million

Warzone 2100

Players	1	**Developer**	Pumpkin
Availability	April	**Publisher**	Eidos
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Strategy

✕	**Attack/Activate/Select Units**
○	**Open/Close Reticule**
□	**Deselect Units**
△	**Activate/Close Battle Window**
L1	**Cycle Through Troops**
L2	**Cycle Through Troops**
R1	**Cycle to Next Unit**
R2	**Not used**

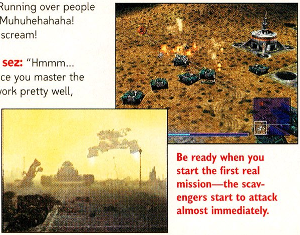
Getting to know you: **Warzone's controls can be pretty confusing at first; luckily the demo includes a tutorial to help you out. We strongly suggest you try it first.**

What is it? A real-time strategy game a la Command & Conquer. Design your own vehicles and weapons, then build factories to manufacture them; repel invaders and scavengers while building up your own military arsenal. On the trial version here you get one training and one real mission.

Our advice: Try this one with the analog controller or Dual Shock. The analog sticks go a long way in improving the controls and are a lot easier on the thumbs. Normal pad users, don't say we didn't warn you.

Did you try: Running over people in your tanks? Muhuhehahaha! Listen to them scream!

***OPM* psychic sez:** "Hmmm... interesting. Once you master the controls they work pretty well, and the idea has merit. Too early to tell, though. Watch for a proper preview soon."



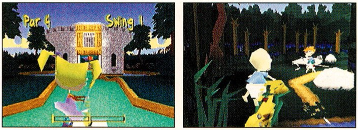
Be ready when you start the first real mission—the scavengers start to attack almost immediately.

Rugrats: Search for Reptar

Players	1	**Developer**	N-Space
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	THQ
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Kids

✕	**Jump**
○	**Change Minigolf Camera**
□	**Hold with D-pad to Walk**
△	**Swing Club**
L1	**Look Up**
L2	**Look Left/Right**
R1	**Reset Camera**
R2	**Look Left/Right**

What is it? The game based on the insanely popular Nickelodeon TV show and movie *Rugrats* (which made $90 million at the box office! How?!). The demo has two different sections you can play: three holes of a simplistic but fun minigolf game, and "Grandpa's Teeth," where you ride Spike the dog to chase a goose and save Chuckie. What does this have to do with Grandpa's teeth? Probably a question better left unanswered.



Check out two different Rugrats minigames on this month's demo: putt-putt golf (left) and ride the family dog. Don't try this one at home, kids.

Legend of Legaia

Players	1	**Developer**	Contrail
Availability	March	**Publisher**	SCEA
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	RPG

You remember this name from somewhere, but can't quite place it... Because we just covered this game in our RPG feature, remember? Well, you do now.

Our advice: How about checking that out, and then booting up our demo disc as a visual aid of sorts. Pretty neat, eh?

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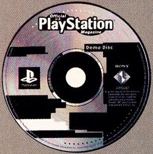

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It's no joke...the April issue of *Expert Gamer* will have the best strategy guides on the hottest games. First, see how Vigilante 8 for the Nintendo 64 compares with the PlayStation version, plus find out about the added "extras" like the four-player mode.

Next, *XG* finally has the strategy on Soul Reaver. The guide will pinpoint trouble spots as well as give helpful hints on how to conquer this game.

And in the Legend of Legaia strategy, *XG* aids you in your quest to stop the weird mist with detailed maps and plenty of advice.

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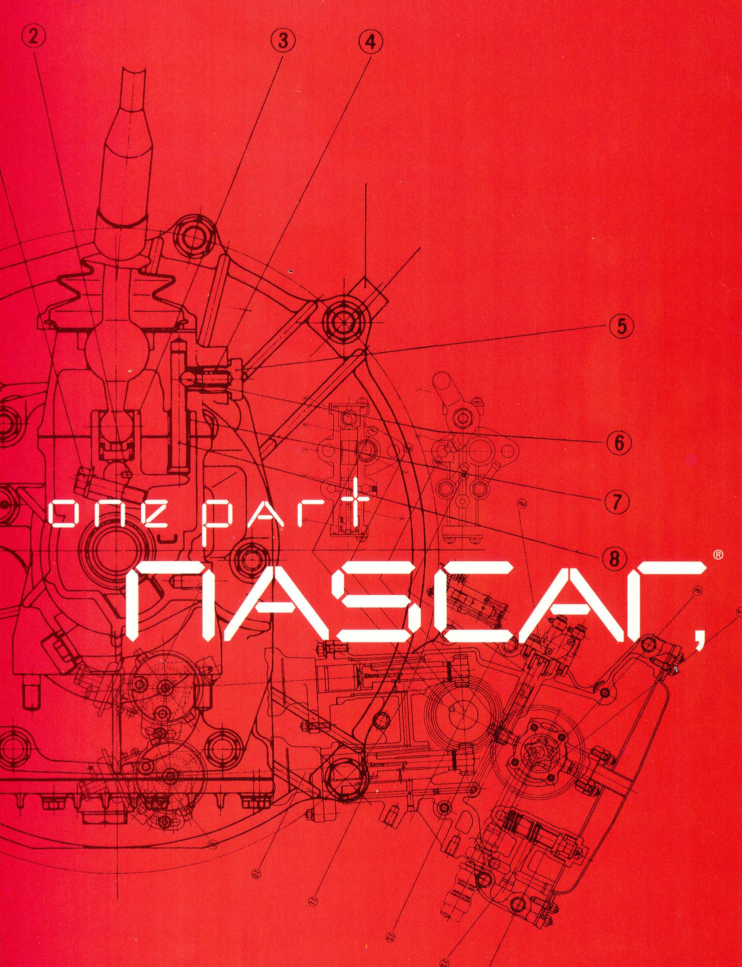
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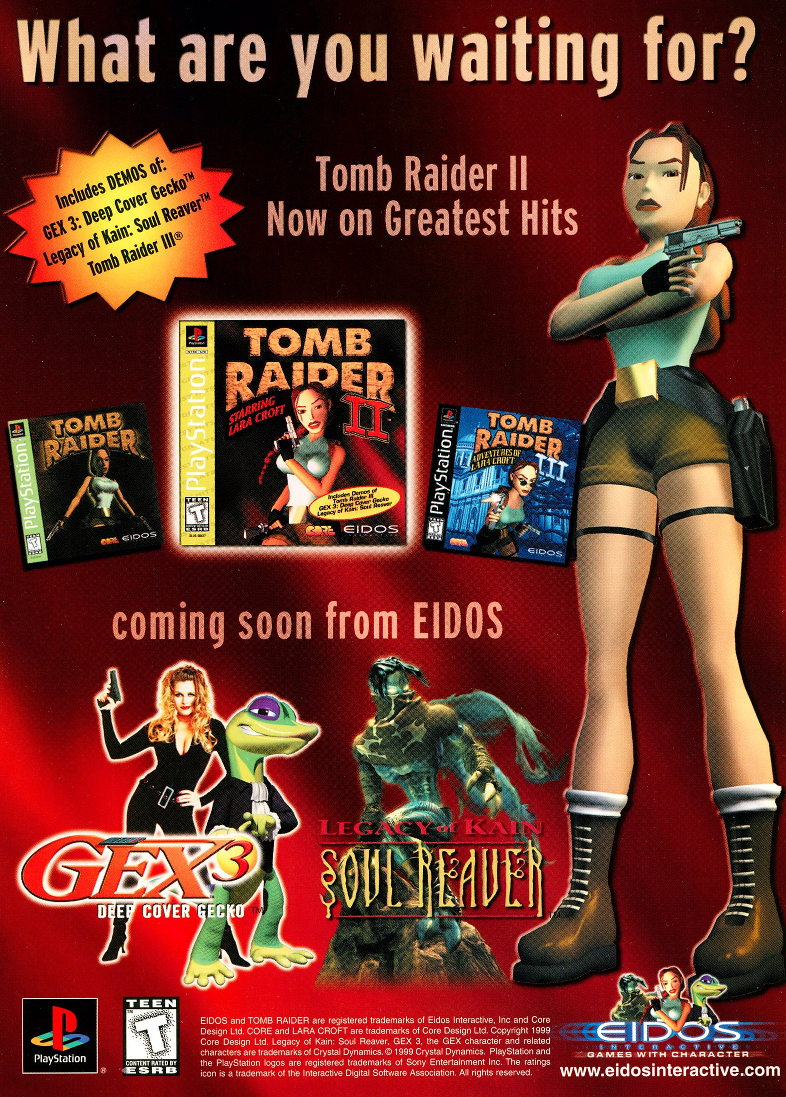

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